

his motley crew, saw but a very small portion of the battle which ended so fatally for us. It did not commence till nightfall. How well I remember that sound of the enemy's gun, of which the shot crashed into our side in reply to the challenge of our captain who hailed her! Then came a broadside from us—the first I had ever heard in battle."

One of the trio, who goes by the name of Ingham, formerly an officer in the United States navy, who had previously asserted (despite the raillery of his companions) a dim and misty acquaintance with the name of Duval, was roused by the closing paragraph to remember that his grandfather—a Captain Heddart—had served as a Volunteer (the preliminary rank to that of midshipman) in the *Serapis*, and that he had both spoken of Denis Duval and recorded mention of him in his journal. Accordingly, on a subsequent evening, this gentleman produced a pile of parchment-covered books, which were diaries of old Captain Heddart's. Hence, I copy with more or less omission, from the "Atlantic Monthly."

They were called log-books, but though in latter years kept on paper ruled for log-books, and often to a certain extent, following the indications of the columns, they were almost wholly personal, and sometimes ran one hundred pages without alluding at all to the ship in which he wrote. Well! The earlier of these was by far the most elegant in appearance. My eyes watered a little (says the writer) as Ingham showed me, on the first page, in the stiff Italian hand in which our grandmothers wrote when they aspired to elegance, the dedication.

"To My Dear Francis—Who will write something here every day, because he loves his Mother."

In this book Ingham had put five or six marks. The first was at this entry:

"A new boy came into the mess. They said he was a French boy, but the first luff says he is the Captain's own nephew."

Two pages on.—"The French boy fought Wimple, and beat him. They fought seven-teen rounds."

"Further yet.—"Toney is off on leave, so the French boy is in our watch. He is not a French boy. His name is Doovarl."

In the midst of a great deal about the mess, and the fellows, and the boys; and an inexplicable fuss about a speculation the mess entered into with some illicit dealer, and which covers pages of ill-written and worse-spelled manuscript. No other distinct allusion to the French boy, not nearly so much as to Toney, or Wimple, or big Wallis, or little Wallis.

But in another volume written years after—when the young officer wrote a much more rapid, though scarcely more legible hand—was a long account of an examination appointed to pass Midshipmen, which to our delight, began thus:

"When the Amphion's boat came up, who should step up but old Den, whom I had not seen since we were in the Rainbow. We were together all day,—and it was very good to see him."

And afterwards, in the detail of the examination, he is spoken of as "Duval." The passage is significant.

Young Heddart details all the questions put to him, as thus:—

"Old Saumarez asked me which was the narrowest part of the Channel, and I told him. Then he asked Silly [sic] bore, if I had 75 fathom, red sand and gravel. I said, 'About N. W.' and the old man said, 'Well, yes,—rather West of N. W., is not it so, Sir Richard?' And Sir Richard did not know what they were talking about, and they pulled out Mackenzie's Survey," etc., etc., etc.—more than any man would delve through at this day, unless he were searching for Paul Jones or Denis Duval, or some other hero. "What is the mark for going into Spithead?" "What is the mark for clearing Royal Sovereign Shoals?"—let us hope they were all well answered. Evidently, in Mr. Heddart's mind, they were more important than any other detail of that day, but fortunately for posterity then comes this passage:

"After me they called up Brooke, and Calthorp, and Clements,—and then old Wingate, Tom Wingate's father, who had examined them, seemed to get tired and turned to Pierson, and said, 'Sir Richard you ought to take your turn.' And so Sir Richard began, and, as if by accident, called up Den.

"'Mr. Duval,' said he, 'how do you find the variation of the compass by the amplitudes or azimuths?'"

"Of course any fool knew that. And of course he could not ask all such questions. So, when he came on *practice*, he said,—

"'Mr. Duval, what is the mark for Stephenson's Shoal?'"

"Oh, dear! what fun it was to hear Den answer,—Lyd Church and the ruins of Lynn Monastery must come in one. The Shoal was about three miles from Dungeness, and bore S. W. or somewhere from it. The Soundings were red sand—or white sand or something—very glib. Then—

"'How would you anchor under Dungeness, Mr. Duval?'"

"And Duval was not too glib, but very certain. He would bring it to bear S. W. by W., or, perhaps, W. S. W.; and he would keep the Hope open of Dover, and he would try to have twelve fathoms water.

"'Well, Mr. Duval, how does Dungeness bear from Beachy Head?'—and so on, and so on.

"And Den was very good and modest, but quite correct all the same, and as true to the point as Coaker and Gunter together. Oh, dear! I hope the post captain did not know that Sir Richard was Den's uncle, and that Den had sailed in and out of Winchelsea harbor, in sight of Beachy Head and Dungeness, ever since the day after he was born!

"But he made no secret of it when we passed mids dined at the Anchor.

"A jolly time we had! I slept there."

With these words, Denis Duval vanished from the Diary.

The rest of that page is blank. The right page, headed, *Remarks, &c., on board H. M. S. Serapis*, in the boy's best copy-hand, goes on with longer entries than any before.

"42 vessels reported for the convoy. Mr. Mycock says we shall not wait for the rest."

"10 o'clock, a. m. Thursday. Two men came on board with news of the pirate Jones. Signal for a coast-pilot,—weighed and sailed as soon as he came. As we pass Flamboro' Head, two sails in sight S. S. W., which the men say are he and his consort."

"At 1 p. m., beat to quarters. All my men at quarters but West, who was on shore when we sailed, the men say on leave,—and Collins in the sick bay (*Mem. shirked.*) The

others in good spirits. Mr. Wallis made us a speech, and the men cheered well. Engaged the enemy at about 7:20 p. m. Mr. Wallis had bade me open my laboring ports, and I did so; but I did not loosen the stern guns, which are fought by my crew, when necessary. The captain hailed the stranger twice, and then the order came to fire. Our gun No. 2 (after gun but one) was my first piece. No. 1 flashed, and the gunner had to put on new priming. Fired twice with those guns, but before we had loaded the second time, for the third fire, the enemy ran into us. One of my men (Craik) was badly jammed on the shock,—squeezed between the gun and the deck. But he did not leave the gun. Tried to fire into the enemy, but just as we got the gun to bear, and got a new light, he fell off. It was very bad working in the dark. The lanterns are as bad as they can be. Loaded both guns, got new port fires, and we ran into the enemy. We were wearing, and I believe our jib boom got into his mizzen rigging. The ships were made fast by the men on the upper deck. At first I could not bring a gun to bear, the enemy was so far ahead of me. But as soon as we anchored, our ship forged ahead a little,—and by bringing the hind axle trucks well aft, I made both my star board guns bear on his bows. Fired right into his forward port. I do not think there was a man or a gun there. In the second battery, forward of me, they had to blow our own ports open, because the enemy lay so close. Stopped firing three times for my guns to cool. Forward we could hear musket shot, and grenades,—but none fell where we were at work. A man came into port No. 5, where little Wallis was, and said that the enemy was sinking, and had released him and the other prisoners. But we had no orders to stop firing. Afterwards there was a great explosion. It began at the main hatch, but came back to me and scalded some of my No. 2 men horribly. Afterwards Mr. Wallis came and took some of No. 2's men to board. I tried to bring both guns to bear with No. 1's crew. No. 2's crew did not come back. At half past ten all firing stopped on the upper deck. Mr. Wallis went up to see if the enemy had struck. He did not come down,—but the master came down and said we had struck, and the orders were to cease firing.

"We had struck to the *Richard* 44. Commodore Jones, and the *Alliance*, 40, which was the vessel they saw from the quarter deck. Our consort, the *Countess of Scarborough*, had struck to the enemy's ship *Pallas*. The officers and crew of the *Richard* are on board our ship. The mids talk English well, and are good fellows. They are very sorry for Mr. Mayrant, who was stabbed with a pike in boarding us, and Mr. Potter, another midshipman, who was hurt. "The enemy's sick and wounded and prisoners were brought on board. At ten on the 25th, his ship, the *Richard*, sank. Played chess with Mr. Merry, one of the enemy's midshipmen. Beat him twice out of three.

"There is a little French fellow named Travaille among their volunteers. When I first saw him he was naked to his waste. He had used his coat for a wad, and his shirt wet to put out fire. Plenty of our men had their coats burnt off, but they did not live to tell it.

Then the diary relapses into the dreariness of most ship-diaries, till they come into the Texel, when it is to a certain extent relieved by discussions about exchanges.

Such a peep at the most remarkable frigate-action in history, as seen by a boy in the dark, through the after ports of one of