

tle in resources, patient, even cheerful under adversity, of wonderful endurance, intelligent and self-reliant, and withal of unflinching, uncompromising fidelity to his flag. Take him all in all, I maintain that your "true Yankee sailor" has not his equal in the world. \* \* \* It is related on good authority that when the Constitution returned from Holland, after transporting the specie required to pay the last installment of our national debt to that country in 1812, the term of service of her crew had expired, and a few days after her arrival they were discharged. Commodore Hull immediately manned his ship by drawing on the fishermen of the New England coast, and the merchant seamen of Salem, Newburyport, Boston, and vicinity. The response was prompt, and it is alleged that when the Constitution soon after captured the Guerriere, of her four hundred and fifty seamen, only sixty had ever served on board of a man-of-war.

Whatever changes may be made by new methods of intercourse in the relations of nations with each other, it is still true, and will still be true, as when Mr. Webster said it in 1824, that—

High rank among the nations results more than from anything else from that military power which we can cause to be water-borne, and from that extent of commerce which we are able to maintain throughout the world.

It will also still be true, that if America is to have ships of war, or is ever again to take her former rank in peaceful ocean commerce, she must look to her hardy and adventurous fishermen for a large share of the supply of her seamen.

No Senator who has to deal with this immense interest will venture rashly to disregard the authority of the present head of our Navy. I have lately received this letter from Admiral Porter:

[OFFICE OF THE ADMIRAL, Washington, D. C., May 4, 1838.

MY DEAR SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of May 4 asking my opinion of the value of our fisheries as a nursery for seamen for the present Navy, which is to be built of iron and propelled by steam.

I beg leave to say that all our fisheries at the present moment are more valuable as nurseries for naval seamen than they ever were before, for our commercial marine has been almost obliterated from the ocean.

In our last war with Great Britain our Navy was largely recruited from Massachusetts fishermen, who made the finest men-of-war's men in the world, which was illustrated by their skill in seamanship and gunnery, which gave us such great success over our opponents.

They not only furnished seamen to the Navy, but manned that immense fleet of privateers that swarmed the ocean, paralyzed the British commerce, and caused a large section of the British people, led by that great political writer, William Cobbett, to demand of the Government that peace should be secured on any terms.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming naval power of Great Britain during the war, with heavy squadrons in every sea, we were indebted to the New England seamen and the brave officers who led them for a success unparalleled in history.

If we had a war to-morrow we must depend almost altogether upon the fishermen of New England to man our naval vessels.

To show the importance of having trained seamen in time of war, I will mention the fact that the regiment of Marblehead fishermen under John Glover were employed to carry Washington's forces across the Delaware when he surprised and captured the Hessians. Without the aid of the fishermen it is doubtful if Washington would have undertaken the perilous enterprise, for the fishermen were the only ones who considered the project feasible.

The ships that will hereafter be built for the Navy will require as good and hardy sailors as have ever been required before, and it is to be regretted that we can not obtain the services of the fishermen in time of peace. Their present calling is more lucrative than any employment they can obtain in the Navy, and there are no sufficient inducements held out to them to enlist in the Government service.

In time of war with a maritime power the occupation of these fishermen would be gone, and they would flock to enlist in the Navy, as they did in the civil war, when the Confederate privateers made their appearance off our coast. The vessels of our Navy may be said at the present time to be manned almost entirely by foreigners who have entered the service not from devotion to the flag. In case war should be suddenly declared against us our ships abroad would be obliged to return home, discharge their crews, and ship American seamen. In a late inspection of the United States ship Trenton the board of inspection reported to me as follows: "The crew is a fair one, considering their want of