

ed severely, and having lost their officer, were undecided what to do, and the entire upper deck was virtually without any defence.

When the enemy entered the ship, from his fore-channels, it was with great caution, and so slowly, that twenty resolute men would have repulsed him. The boarders had not yet appeared from below, and meeting with no resistance, he began to move forward. This critical moment lost the ship; for the English, encouraged by the state of the "Chesapeake's" upper deck, now rushed forward in numbers, and soon had command above board. The remaining officers appeared on deck, and endeavoured to make a rally, but it was altogether too late, for the boatswain's mate mentioned, had removed the gratings of the berth-deck, and had run below, followed by a great many men. Soon after, the "Chesapeake's" colours were hauled down by the enemy, who got complete possession of the ship, with very little resistance."

This will show the skill with which Mr. Cooper burrows out excuses for the failure of his countrymen—excuses scarcely necessary under even a liberal construction of the circumstances, for

"When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war!"

And they who could maintain a combat so equal as that of the *Chesapeake* against the *Shannon*, need scarcely blush that fortune at last decided in favour of the flag which had so long swept "unconquered o'er the main,"—whose name had been the watchword of victory, until the world acknowledged the ocean-empress wherever its folds were seen spreading like eagle wings upon the blast.

We are willing to accord to the sailors of the American States, a full share of whatever laurels have latterly grown upon the seas—nor would we willingly rob them of a single leaf which has been honourably gained; and when no national prejudices interfere, Mr. Cooper has well pictured the generous bearing of the tars of the star and stripe. Their wars with the Tripolitan pirates have afforded a field for some striking scenes. We subjoin one, exhibiting the self-devotion of several gallant officers and men, who volunteered to man a fire-ship, laden with powder and other dangerous materials, which on a dark night was sent into the harbour of Tripoli, for the purpose of destroying the fleet of their marauding enemies:—

"The night was darker than usual, and the last that may be said to have been seen of the "Intrepid," was the shadowy forms of her canvas, as she steered slowly, but steadily, into the obscurity, where the eyes of the many anxious spectators fancied they could still trace her dim outline, most probably after it had totally disappeared. This sinking into the gloom of night was no bad image of the impenetrable mystery that has veiled the subsequent proceedings of the gallant party on board her.

When the "Intrepid" was last seen by the naked eye, she was not a musket shot from the mole, standing directly for the harbour. One officer on board the nearest vessel, the "Nautilus," is said, however, to have never lost sight of her with a night glass, but even he could distinguish no more than her dim

proportions. There is a vague rumour that she touched on the rocks, but it does not appear to rest on sufficient authority to be entitled to absolute credit. To the last moment she appears to have been advancing. About this time the batteries began to fire. Their shot is said to have been directed towards every point where an enemy might be expected, and it is not improbable that some were aimed against the ketch.

The period between the time when the "Intrepid" was last seen, and that when most of those who watched without the rocks learned her fate, was not very long. This was an interval of intense, almost of breathless expectation, and it was interrupted only by the flashes and roar of the enemy's guns. Various reports exist of what those who gazed into the gloom beheld, or fancied they beheld; but one melancholy fact alone would seem to be beyond contradiction. A fierce and sudden light illuminated the panorama, a torrent of fire streamed upward, that in shape resembled the great eruption of Vesuvius as it has been described by Pliny, and a concussion followed that made the cruisers in the offing tremble from their trucks to their keels. This sudden blaze of light was followed by a darkness of twofold intensity, and the guns of the batteries became mute, as if annihilated. Numerous shells had been seen in the air, and some of them descended on the rocks, where they were heard to fall. Their fuses were burning and a few exploded, but much the greater part were extinguished in the water. The mast, too, had risen perpendicularly, with its rigging and canvass blazing, but the descent veiled all in night.

So sudden and tremendous was the eruption, and so intense the darkness which succeeded, that it was not possible to ascertain the precise position of the ketch at the moment. In the glaring, but fleeting light, no person could say that he had noted more than one material circumstance, the fact that the "Intrepid" had not reached the point at which she aimed. The shells had not spread far, and those which fell on the rocks were so many proofs of this important truth. There was no other fact to indicate the precise spot where the ketch exploded. A few cries arose from the town, but the subsequent and deep silence that followed was more eloquent than any clamour. The whole of Tripoli was like a city of Tombs.

If every eye had been watchful previously to the explosion, every eye now became doubly vigilant to discover the retreating boats. Men got over the sides of the vessels, holding lights, and placing their ears near the water, in the hope of detecting the sounds of even muffled oars; and often was it fancied that the gallant adventurers were near. They never re-appeared. Hour after hour went by, until hope itself began to fail. Occasionally a rocket gleamed in the darkness, or a sullen gun was heard from the frigate, as signals to the boats; but the eyes that should have seen the first, were sightless, and the last tolled on the ears of the dead."

Notwithstanding the feature of Mr. Cooper's history which we have so freely condemned, we are happy to repeat our opinion, that it will be a highly valuable addition to the standard literature of America. In fact, all who wish to become intimately acquainted with the history of the neighbouring States, will find in it much that is interesting and useful, and which is worthy of respect as being the recorded views of one of the leading literary characters of the Union.