

pletely and wonderfully disproved by the American vessels, not more than one to a hundred, defeating the British.

After Captain Porter's first cruise in the frigate *Essex*, he brought her into the Delaware, where she lay in the stream off Chester, at which village his wife's father, William Anderson, kept a tavern. He was one of the members who represented Pennsylvania in the House of Representatives of the United States. Soon after my election with him to Congress, in October, 1812, some of our party entertained Captain Porter at a dinner, at his father-in-law's tavern in Chester, a few days before the *Essex* sailed, the 27th or 28th of October, 1812, on her last and memorable cruise, one of the most remarkable that naval history registers. Porter was a small, slight, and rather ill-favored New England man, of genius, nerve, and capacity for heroic achievement. He avowedly hated the English marine as heartily as it was possible for Admiral Lord Collingwood, with racy but neither useless or perhaps censurable British patriotism to hate the French; which detestation that mild and excellent officer said he deemed his duty to his country. For Porter, when a poor cabin-boy, had been seized by a British press-gang, and resisted it unto death; made his escape, fugitive and liable to be treated as a deserter; worked his passage home as a common sailor; and, like hundreds more of American sea Hannibals, had sworn vengeance upon the altar of freedom against the hateful lords of the ocean, with whom, as other American naval officers, he longed for opportunity to prove that they were able to cope. "Free trade and sailors' rights," the motto which he flung out from the mast-head of his little frigate, was in his heart's core, and he was desperately resolved to brand it on British shoulders. American seafaring hatred of the English was then a pervading sentiment, when general repugnance of Americans to English was neither unnatural nor barbarous. After years of outrageous hostilities, civil wars, kindred conflicts, impressment by sea, conflagration and havoc ashore, bloody indignities every where, contumelious English habits and arrogant overbearing, Porter, Decatur, and other naval officers, and Jackson and Brown in the army, were fired with national animosity which helped exploit. Nor did the in-