

Continued

Admirals and six post-captains were court-martialled. Admiral Byng was not on his own deck, not exactly as Voltaire's mot describes it, pour encourager les autres, and not quite on

that he had no gleam of unselfish passion, fire, and nothing of the gallant fighting impulse which had been the characteristic of the British sailor. He lost Minorca, and displaced the British flag because he was too dainty to face the enemy. The corrupt and illegitimate temper of English politics—the legacy of Walpole's evil regime—condemned the bloodless Macaulay's Prime Minister of Newcastle; at that moment, indeed, fawning politicians were at honor, without truth, who loved office only less than he loved his own country. A Prime Minister of Newcastle made possible an admiral like Blyng. Horace Walpole told the story how, when the much-enduring British public broke into one emotion after the disgrace of Minorca, and Newcastle was trembling for his own head, a reputation for the city of London, "replied Newcastle, with fawning features, 'he shall be tried by his countrymen,' replied Newcastle, 'directly!'" There was an age of base men, and the navy—neglected, starved, dishonored—had lost the great tradition of the British sailor spirit so soon to the swelling intellect of the nineteenth century. But in 1759 the dazzling intellect and masterful will of the first of the great English admirals, Lord Blyng, and the spirit of the nation was beginning to awake. Burns and Wilberforce and the younger Blyng were the first to wake the nation with dying eyes the French battleships broken on plains of Abraham and Canada won. But the great event of the year was the battle of the Clouds, Quiberon. Hawke was the demon of a barrier; he entered the navy at fourteen years of age as a volunteer, officer, and captain at twenty, and a third Lieutenant at twenty-four, and became captain at thirty. He knew the details of the sea, and the weather, and seed-od of the forecastle, was quite modern in the keen and human interest he took in his men, had some Continued on page 13.

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