

half an hour, he disabled, with three guns only, both his opponents, so as to compel them to haul off to repair damages; this as-

*display of their motto flags, and the number of jacks at all the mast-heads.* I, with as much expedition as circumstances would admit of, got my ship-ready for action, and endeavoured to get a spring on my cable, but had not succeeded, when the enemy, at 54 minutes after 3 P.M. made his attack, the Phœbe placed herself under my stern, and the Cherub on my starboard bow; but the Cherub soon finding her situation a hot one, bore up and run under my stern also; where both ships kept up a hot raking fire, I had got three long 12 pounders out of the stern ports, which were worked with so much bravery and skill, that in half an hour we so disabled both as to compel them to haul off to repair damages. In the course of this firing, I had, by the great exertions of Mr. Edward Barnewall, the acting sailing-master, assisted by Mr. Linscott, the boatswain, succeeded in getting springs on our cable three different times; but the fire of the enemy was so excessive, that before we could get our broad-side to bear, they were shot away and thus rendered useless to us. My ship had received many injuries, and several had been killed and wounded—but my brave officers and men, notwithstanding the unfavorable circumstances under which we were brought to action, and the powerful force opposed to us, were no ways discouraged—all appeared determined to defend their ship to the last extremity, and to die in preference to a shameful surrender. *Our gaff, with the ensign and the motto flag at the mizen, had been shot away, but Free Trade and Sailors' Rights, continued to fly at the fore. Our ensign was replaced by another—and to guard against a similar event, an ensign was made fast in the mizen-rigging, and several jacks were hoisted in different parts of the ship.* The enemy soon repaired his damages for a fresh attack; he now placed himself, with both his ships, on my starboard quarter, out of the reach of my carronades, and where my stern guns could not be brought to bear—he there kept up a most galling fire, which it was out of my power to return, when I saw no prospect of injuring him without getting under way and becoming the assailant. My top-sail sheets and haulyards were all shot away, as well as the jib and fore-top-mast-stay-sail-haulyards. The only rope not cut was the flying-jib-haulyards—and that being the only sail I could set, I caused it to be hoisted, my cable to be cut, and ran down on both ships, with an intention of laying the Phœbe on board.

The firing on both sides was now tremendous; I had let fall my foretopsail and foresail, but the want of tacks and sheets rendered them almost useless to us—yet we were enabled for a short time to close with the enemy; and although our decks were now strewn with dead and our cockpit filled with wounded—although our ship had been several times on

sertion may, and doubtless will, be readily adopted by readers who know nothing of what three twelve-pounders can effect in the

fire, and was rendered a perfect wreck, we were still encouraged to hope to save her, from the circumstance of the Cherub, from her crippled state, being compelled to haul off. She did not return to close action again, although she had it apparently in her power to do so, but kept up a distant firing with her long guns. The Phœbe, from our disabled state, was enabled however, by edging off, to choose the distance which best suited her long guns, and kept up a tremendous fire on us, which mowed down my brave companions by the dozen. Many of my guns had been rendered useless by the enemy's shot, and many of them had their whole crews destroyed—we manned them again from those which were disabled, and one gun in particular was three times manned—fifteen men were slain at it in the course of the action! but strange as it may appear, the captain of it escaped with only a slight wound. Finding that the enemy had it in his power to choose his distance, I now gave up all hopes of closing with him, and, as the wind for the moment, seemed to favour the design, I determined to endeavour to run her on shore, land my men and destroy her. Every thing seemed to favour my wishes. We had approached the shore within musket shot, and I had no doubt of succeeding, when in an instant the wind shifted from the land (as it is very common in this port in the latter part of the day) and payed our head down on the Phœbe, where we were again exposed to a dreadful raking fire—My ship was now totally unmanageable: yet as her head was toward the enemy, and he to the leeward of me, I still hoped to be able to board him. At this moment Lieut. Downes came on board to receive my orders, under the impression that I should soon be a prisoner. He could be of no use to me in the then wretched state of the Essex; and finding (from the enemy's putting his helm up) that my last attempt at boarding would not succeed, I directed him after he had been ten minutes on board, to return to his own ship, to be prepared for defending and destroying her in case of attack. He took with him several of my wounded, leaving three of his boat's crew on board to make room for them.—The Cherub now had an opportunity of distinguishing herself, by keeping up a hot fire on him during his return. The slaughter on board my ship had now become horrible, the enemy continued to rake us, and we unable to bring a gun to bear. I therefore directed a hawser to be bent to the sheet anchor, and the anchor to be cut from the bows to bring her head round: this succeeded. We again got our broadside to bear, and as the enemy was much crippled and unable to hold his own, I have no doubt he would have drifted out of gun shot before he discovered we had anchored, had not the hawser unfortunately parted. My ship had taken fire several times