

the outbreak of the war, the American navy consisted of four frigates and eight sloops, but they were all ships of new and skilful construction, combining great power with great speed, and both, in the number of guns and weight of metal, exceeding their nominal strength. The embargo supplied these choice cruisers with admirable crews, while the officers, in seamanship and bravery, were second to none. It had been remarked by observant travellers in preceding years, that the Americans were building vessels of their respective classes, very superior to our own, but the British Admiralty of the day were deaf to suggestion or advice. They laughed to scorn all such Yankee inventions.

The reverend greybeards raved and stormed
That younker laddies
Should think they better were informed
Than their auld daddies.

Thus, when war came, a solitary frigate, splendidly armed, equipped, manned and officered, proved more than a match for ships of war, nominally equal, but in fact, greatly inferior; while her speed enabled her to set at defiance all vessels or combinations of superior force. The frigates too, of England, scattered on every sea, were not only, individually, unequal in strength, but, from their numbers, imperfect in appointment and under-manned. All this ought to have been foreseen and provided for. In the absence of provision came the catastrophe. We have already seen how, in the first naval attempt of the war, the *Belvidera* had maintained the skilful supremacy of England, but this was followed by blows of different augury. In August, 1812,* the *Constitution* encountered the *Guerrière*. The American, in tonnage, weight of metal, and number of men, was half as heavy again as the Englishman. The former was fresh out of port. The latter returning from a long cruise to refit, with fore-

* August 19, 1812.

mast and bowsprit sprung. Captain Dacres, in true bull-dog fashion, fought for two hours, yard-arm to yard-arm. He was crushed, dismasted, wholly wrecked—seventy-nine men killed and wounded, and thirty shots received below the water-line. He struck, without disgrace, to an antagonist uninjured comparatively in hull and rigging, and whose casualties amounted to fourteen.* The *Guerrière* was sinking when she struck. She was fired by the , enemy and blown up.

Next, in October, 1812, ensued the fight between the *Frolic* and the American *Wasp*, sloop of war, of the same nominal force, but the broadside, equipment and tonnage greatly in favour of the American. The *Frolic*, damaged in a gale, was refitting rigging. She was soon reduced to the condition of a log on the water, and was carried by boarding, the only living occupants of her decks being three officers and the man at the wheel. The British loss in a conflict of an hour was thirty killed and between forty and fifty wounded. Both ships were taken in the afternoon of the same day by the *Poictiers*, 74 guns, and sent into Bermuda.f

*The *Guerrière* had been captured from the French, and for the beauty of her model was taken into our service. She was therefore an old ship, and her scantling only admitted of the use of long 18-pounder guns, while the *Constitution* carried 24 pounders on her main, and 32 pounders on her upper deck.

The comparative fighting power of the two ships may be thus given :-

Constitution.	<i>Guerrière</i> .
58 guns.	48 guns.
Throwing 1536 lbs. shot.	Throwing 1034 lbs. shot.
Crew, 460.	Crew, 240.
Tonnage, 1538.	Tonnage, 1092.
<i>Frolic</i> .	<i>Wasp</i> .
18 guns.	18 guns.
Broadside, 262 lbs.	Broadside, 268 lbs.
Crew, 92.	Crew, 135.
15 hors de combat.	5 killed, 5 wounded.
Tonnage, 384.	Tonnage, 434.

On the 25th October came a still sturdier blow. The United States encountered the Macedonian, 56 guns to 44, and the disparity still more increased by weight of broadside, tonnage, and crew. The fight was fierce,—at long range,—in close fight,—in attempts to board,—in a tremendous sea. The Macedonian was so crippled as to become unmanageable, and being exposed to raking broadsides, she could not answer. After a contest of two hours and upwards, with mizzenmast gone by the board, main and foretopmast shot away, thirty-six men killed and sixty-eight wounded, she slowly and sadly lowered her flag. The disparity of force is best shown by the comparative losses. The British frigate lost 104 killed and wounded ; the American twelve.*

Nor was this the last disaster of the year. On the 20th Dec., the Java frigate, under command of the young and gallant Lambert, left Spithead for the East Indian Station. Lambert had been at Quebec in 1808, in the Iphigenie frigate, where he had attracted much attention, as the *beau ideal* of a British sailor. Brock speaks of him with warmth in his familiar letters. He sailed from Spithead with a motley crew—gaol-birds, as they were called—being many of them poachers and smugglers, desperadoes, devoid of discipline, but, as the event showed, full of fight ; many of them, however, had never fired a cartridge. Lambert, who had some American experience, remonstrated. He was answered with a sneer : he was told that a voyage to Bombay and back would make a crew : and went to his death, doomed but determined. On the 29th Dec. he fell in with the Constitution—The inequality was much the same as in the preceding contest with the Macedonian. The Constitution at first stood away, long range being her *forte*, but Lambert was a

• United States.	Macedonian.
Broadside, weight of metal, 864 lbs.	Broadside, 528 lbs.
Crew, 474.	Crew, 254.
Tonnage, 1533.	Tonnage, 1081.

seaman, and one of the bravest of the brave. He knew that his only chance was at close quarters, and by dint of good seamanship, at length ranged alongside of an antagonist, on his part nothing loath. The fight lasted two hours and a-half ; Lambert attempting to board, fell mortally wounded. With no greater crash to the brave hearts around, down came, at the same time, the foremast of the Java, clogging the deck with wreck. Lieut. Chads took the command, and desperately fought on ; the rigging and running gear ignited from the discharge of the guns. At last not a piece could be brought to bear, and the gallant ship, helpless and hopeless, surrendered to the foe,—but so utterly riddled and ruined, that the American Captain Bainbridge, having saved the remains of her crew, left her to the flames, and the charred and shattered *torso* of the Java, " into the deep went down." * Lambert fell, a hero as he had lived, and expired six days after. His " gaol-bird " crew, true Britons at heart, and inspired by his devoted gallantry,

— died, all pluck and bottom,

To save a sire who blushed he had begot 'em.

The size of these American frigates may be estimated, on stating the fact that the largest 74 gun ship in the British navy at that time—the Dragon—was two feet shorter, though two feet wider, than the President, the Constitution, or the United States, rated as 44 gun frigates ; and that while frigates of the class of the Guerriere, the Macedonian, and the Java, carried each twenty-eight long 18 pounders and sixteen 82 pounder carronades, the American 44's, so rated, carried thirty-two long 24 pounders and twenty-two

• Java, 44 guns,	Constitution, ut supra.
Men, 292	Men, 460
Killed, 22	Killed, 10
Wounded, 92-114	Wounded, 48— 58
178	402

32 pounder carronades. At long range they were superior in weight and precision of fire, and immeasurably superior at close quarters.*

The effect of these successive disasters can hardly be exaggerated. England stood, for the moment, stunned. The continent of Europe shouted with joy. "Down with the sea-dogs, *d bas les loops marins*," was the polyglot cry; but the old sea-dog shook himself sulkily, showed his teeth, muttered an ominous growl, and betook himself at once to remedy the evil. Never does England bear herself more bravely, never does she look more worthy of her fortunes, than in the face of misfortune. The Admiralty, slow to move, when moved, swept on, with the force of the tide which rebuked the Courtiers of Canute. Efforts were made to strengthen the squadron on the American coast, and single vessels were equipped, and manned, fit to encounter the leviathans of America; a further calamity spurred them on. On the 14th February, 1813, the American Hornet stung to death the British Peacock.* Both were sloops nominally of the same force, but the Hornet had 450 lbs. guns more than her opponent, and the weight of her broadside was double. In men and size she was much superior. The contest continued for an hour and a half. The Peacock was so torn to pieces, that she sank with thirteen of her own men, and four Hornets, striving, nobly but vainly, to save their foemen from a watery grave.^f

As in the frigates, so was the disproportion in the American sloops of war. "For instance the sloop Hornet carried eighteen 32 carron-

* Veritas, p. 145.

t Peacock.	Hornet.
Broadside guns, 9.	Broadside guns, 10.
Weight of broadside, 192 lbs.	Weight of broadside, 297.
Men, 110.	Men, 162.
Tons, 386.	Tons, 460.

ades, four long 9 and two long 6 pounders with 162 picked then; the British sloop Peacock had sixteen carronades of 24 lbs and two long 9's, with 110 men." *

At last came the counterstroke. **die many gallant** officers, anxious to meet the Americans on equal terms, was Captain Broke, in command of the Shannon. He had under his command a crack ship mounting 52 guns, and were carefully trained to gunnery and small arms. They knew their commander, and their commander knew them; and this mutual confidence made its mark in the hour of need. Broke, off the American coast, had learned that the frigate Chesapeake of 52 guns was then in Boston fitting for sea, whereupon he dismissed his consort, the Tenedos, a frigate of 36 guns, with instructions to keep out of the way while he had a fair "turn up" with the foe, and then, with Castilian punctilio, sent a cartel to Captain Lawrence requesting in the most respectful terms "the honour of a meeting to try the fortunes of their respective flags." Captain Lawrence, as brave a sailor as ever trod quarter deck, had anticipated the invitation, and was prompt in his acknowledgments. In brief space, 11th June, 1813, Broke saw the American under weigh, and standing down upon him, surrounded by yachts and boats, while the cheers of his enthusiastic countrymen rang through the welkin. An entertainment had been prepared on shore for the return of those who were thus arrayed and sent to conquest, but the feast was served with funeral baked meats.

The contest which ensued it is difficult to give in detail. It was short, sharp, and decisive, most bravely fought on both sides, but the magnificent gunnery of the British gave them an advantage from the outset, which was crowned by boarding. From the deck and from yard-arm, simultaneously, the American was carried, in a

* Veritas, p. 146; Letter 9.

Letter from Broke to Lawrence, James, Vol: I. p. 199.

desperate hand-to-hand struggle, led by Broke, who was severely wounded in the fray. Lawrence had fallen cheering on his men, and died shortly after the action, honoured and lamented. His body was buried at Halifax with every mark of military respect. In fifteen minutes from the firing of the first gun, the Chesapeake was a prize to the Shannon ; and in that brief space 145 brave men on the American side, and 83 on the English had passed to their account. The moral effect of this victory was tremendous—a succession of disasters was repaired at a blow. The deadly spell was broken, and England again held in her grasp the talisman of success. It was recovered by her own resolution to repair defeat, and by a tardy, but just, appreciation of the merits of others.*

In all these actions the strength of vessels, weight of metal and number of men were decidedly in favour of the Americans—the meed of valor was equally divided. In courtesy and manly bearing the American generously vied with the Briton. Lawrence and Lambert alike consecrated with their blood the flags of their respective countries. The echoes of the indiscriminating sea sing a requiem, everlastingly, for the souls of the brave men who followed their example.

Yet more the billows and the depths have more,
 Light hearts and brave are gathered to thy breast :
 They hear not now the booming water roar ;
 The battle thunder will not break their rest.
 Keep thy red gold and gems, thou stormy grave !
 Give back the true and brave!

• ARMAMENTS.

Shannon.		Chesapeake.
Broadside guns,	25	25
Weight of metal,	535	590
Number of crew,	306	376
Tonnage,	1066 tone.	11.35 tons.

The early successes of this naval campaign exercised great moral influence on the general conduct of the war. They more than compensated in the American mind for the national shortcomings on shore. The seaboard cities were then the centres of population and of opinion. The tastes, the pursuits, the sympathies of the people were with their sailors. The present exultation gave no thought to the future, or to disagreeable admonitions on the distant frontier of Canada. The Government also were not unaware that the present advantages on the Lakes might, with their opportunities, be greatly improved, and the prestige of victory be transferred from the ocean to these inland seas.

CHAPTER VII.

ISA American preparations on Lakes Ontario and Erie. British Ministry did its best—Canada its duty. Men and money voted. New Brunswick regiment marched from Fredericton on snow shoes. Major General Evans. Sir James Yeo and seamen arrive from Halifax. British and American forces on the frontier. In the West. Harrison and Proctor. General Winchester defeated and captured at Frenchtown. Capt. Forsyth harries Brockville. Reprisals. Sh4George Prevost at Prescott. Permits demonstration. Prescott. Ogdensburg. Colonel George Macdonnell. The Glengarries. Bishop Macdonnell. Dash at Ogdensburg—Dangers of the ice—The place taken. Capt. Jenkins and Lieut. Ridge. Pierre Holmes. His story. Macdonnell's courage, courtesy, and kindness.

It has been said before, that one effect of the war had been to concentrate the national resources, both of men and material, and to dispose them most conveniently for operations on either arena, of land or lake ; immense preparations were made at once. Sackett's Harbour on Lake Ontario, and Presqu'isle on Lake Erie, were supplied with comparative facility from New York and Philadelphia, and a naval force, created with great rapidity, very superior to any with which Great Britain, engaged in every sea, and so distant from her colonies, could encounter the emergency.

The preparations, therefore, for the campaign of 1813, were carried on with increased vigour by the American Government. The British Ministry, it may be believed, did their best, but at great disadvantage. Thronged and beset by difficulties, it is not unnatural that they should still have temporized, still have indulged in a lingering hope that more pacific counsels might yet prevail, or that the chapter of accidents would open at a leaf propitious to the fortunes of Britain.

Nor was Canada wanting to itself. The Legislature of 1812. The Artillery Bill Canada had assembled on the 29th Dec., 1812. The Artillery Bill Act was renewed and extended. £500,000 were authorized to be put into circulation. £15,000 were granted to equip the embodied militia. £1,000 to provide hospitals, and £25,000 towards the support of the war. A duty of 21 per cent. on all merchandise imported into the Province was also granted for the support of the war. The expenses of the militia for the current year had been £55,000, or \$220,000.* The whole expenditure of the Government was £98,777.

In addition to the force already raised, the militia was augmented by a draft in Lower Canada. A battalion was embodied in Quebec, (the 6th) for Garrison duty. A Canadian Fencible Regiment, a regiment of Glengarries, and a regiment of Voltigeurs were recruited diligently, and with success. The New Brunswick regular regiment, (the 104th,) in the month of March explored, for the first time, the wintry wilderness lying between Fredericton on the River St. John and the St. Lawrence. These hardy men

* Christie, Vol. X, p. 72.

f The Montreal Canadian Courant—an extinct Literary Volcano—of the 4th May, 1812, copies from the Quebec Gazette of a preceding date:

"THE VOLTIGEURS.

"This corps now forming under the command of Major De Salaberry is miltipling with a despatch worthy of the ancient warlike spirit of the country. Capt. Perrault's company was filled up in 48 hours, and was yesterday passed by His Excellency the Governor ; and the companies of Captains Duchesnay, Panet and L'Ecuyer, have now nearly their complement. The young men move in solid columns towards the enlisting officers, with an expression of countenance not to be mistaken. The Canadians are awakening from the repose of an age (secured to them by good government and virtuous habits. *Their anger is fresh*—the object of their preparation simple and distinct. They are to defend their King, known to them only by acts of kindness, and a native country long since made sacred by the exploits of their forefathers."