

RECOLLECTIONS OF
A NAVAL OFFICER

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BY
J. M. M.

1840

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RECOLLECTIONS
OF A
NAVAL OFFICER

1841-1865

BY

CAPT. WILLIAM HARWAR PARKER,

AUTHOR OF "ELEMENTS OF SEAMANSHIP," "HARBOR ROUTINE AND EVOLUTIONS,"
"NAVAL TACTICS," "NAVAL LIGHT ARTILLERY—AFLOAT AND ASHORE,"
"REMARKS ON THE NAVIGATION OF THE COASTS BETWEEN
SAN FRANCISCO AND PANAMA."

"The greatest friend of Truth is Time ; her greatest enemy is Prejudice."

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNERS' SONS

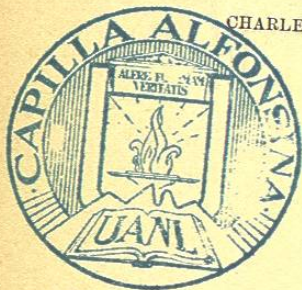
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PREFACE.

During the war with Mexico, 1847-48, a friend of mine, J. Hogan Brown, was the sailing master of the United States steamship *Mississippi*. The *Mississippi* went from Vera Cruz in the squadron to attack Tampico, and had in tow the schooner *Bonita*—gunboat.

During the night a "norther" sprang up, and the officer of the deck let the *Bonita* go, and did not think it necessary to report the fact to the commodore.

In the morning the commodore, Matthew C. Perry, came on deck, and not seeing the *Bonita*, inquired where she was. The officer of the deck told him that in the night they had let her go in consequence of the weather. The commodore, who was not noted for his *suaviter in modo*, though strong in the *fortiter in re*, said: "Send the master to me." Upon his appearance he said, "Mr. Brown, where is that schooner?" Brown, who was never at a loss for an answer, instantly replied, "She is S. S. E., fifteen miles distant." "She is, eh?" said the commodore, and turning to the officer of the deck he said, "Steer S. S. E." The officers in the ward room, hearing of the occurrence, said, "Well! old Brown is caught at last." In about an hour the man at the mast-head called out: "Sail ho! "Where away?" said the officer of the deck. "Right ahead," was the reply; and in a few minutes: "Can you make her out?"

"Yes, sir, a schooner." "By George," said the officers in the ward room, "old Brown is right, after all!" After awhile the strange sail was reached, and proved to be a merchant schooner bound to Pensacola. The commodore, in a great rage, sent for Brown and said: "Did you not say the schooner *Bonita* bore S. S. E. fifteen miles off?" "Well, sir," said Brown, "the reckoning called for a schooner; but it did not say it was the *Bonita*!"

Now the moral of this is that *this reckoning* calls for a schooner, but no particular schooner: so if any fellow expects his schooner to be mentioned he may find himself mistaken.

I wish to say here, with Captain Kincaid of the rifle battalion: "That this is *my* book; and if any man wishes his name or services to be specially mentioned, let him write a book for himself."

43 YORK ST.,
Norfolk, Va.

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