CHAPTER XVI.

REPORT FOR DUTY AT THE NAVAL ACADEMY—ORDERED TO THE "MERRIMAC"—AUXILIARY STEAM POWER—SAIL FROM BOSTON—ARRIVAL AT RIO—THE "GANGES" 74—DOUBLE CAPE HORN AND ARRIVE AT TALCAHUANA — BRILLIANT PERFORMANCE AT VALPARAISO — CHINCHA ISLANDS—THE CHINESE COOLIE AND THE PERUVIAN CHOLO—FIRST INHABITANTS OF NORTH AMERICA—CALLAO—LIMA—THE SPANISH AMERICAN REPUBLICS AND POPULATION—PAYTA—THE BUCCANEERS—ALEXANDER SELKIRK—JUAN FERNANDEZ—DAMPIER—CIRCUMNAVIGATORS—MAGELLAN—DRAKE—THE EARLY SPANISH VOYAGERS.

I REPORTED for duty at the Naval Academy in October, 1853, and remained there until June, 1857. For the first two years I was an instructor in mathematics, and afterwards, in navigation and astronomy. In the summer of 1855 I made a cruise in the practice ship *Preble* with the midshipmen, as instructor in navigation and watch officer; we visited Eastport, Portland, Cape Cod and Boston. I found the Academy much improved since my examination; the curriculum more expansive; the grounds greatly enlarged; and many new buildings erected. In September, 1855, I received my commission of lieutenant; having served just fourteen years for it. In the fall of 1857 I was ordered to the screw frigate *Merrimac*, fitting out at Boston for the Pacific. She bore the flag of Commodore J. C. Long, and was commanded by Commander Hitchcock. The *Merrimac* was one of a class of steam frigates just built. She was over 3,000 tons, and carried a battery of 9 inch Dahlgren guns on her main deck; and on the spar deck two 11 inch Dahlgren guns as bow and stern chasers, and sixty-four pounder shell guns. She and her sister ships were much the largest frigates of their time. She was a fine-looking ship, and her main deck with its powerful battery was a picture for a sailor to behold; but I cannot say much for either her sailing or steaming

qualities. She was very long (for those days) and correspondingly sluggish in her movements. She *could* "tack," however, and in that had the advantage of some of the men-of-war of the present day; but I believe that with a smart breeze an old time line-of-battle ship would have worked round her in spite of her "auxiliary" steam power. Before I joined her she had made a six months trial cruise and her officers gave fabulous accounts of her speed under sail. I never discovered it myself though I was in her over two years. I recollect we made the passage from Panama to Callao in company with the *Decatur*, and she beat us in all the weather we experienced on the trip, yet she was the ship that Joe Watkins said, one morning got under the shade of a large tree while sailing along the coast of Africa, *and did not get out of it though she had a fair wind all day!*

"I cannot tell how the truth may be;
I say the tale as 'twas said to me."

As for her speed under steam, 7 knots was the maximum when we left Boston; at the end of the cruise 5 knots was all she could keep up for 24 hours. The fact is the "auxiliary" steam power was an absurdity; the ships would neither steam nor sail. It has always seemed to me that men-of-war should be provided with engines and boilers calculated to give them very great speed; they need not use steam in cruising unless in a case of emergency, and the exercise of a ship under sail would be of inconceivable benefit to the younger officers. While the "naval officer" is really a soldier, that is a *military* man, and must not be confounded with the merchant captain who simply follows a mercantile pursuit, yet it must be borne in mind that it is just as essential that he should know how to manage a ship as it is that a dragoon should know how to ride; therefore too much attention cannot be paid to this important point in the education of the young officers of the navy.

The *Merrimac* had a full complement of officers and men and we mustered about six hundred souls. On the 17th

of October we sailed from Boston on what was to prove a dull uninteresting cruise. We had on board the Hon. R. Kidder Meade who had just been appointed Minister to Brazil. We had fine weather on our way out, and arrived at Rio Janeiro in December. Here we found the English 74, *Ganges*, Admiral Baynes, on her way to the Pacific. We frequently fell in with her afterwards and knew her officers well. Burgoyne, who was lost with most of his crew in the iron clad ship *Captain* in 1870 was her commander. He was a bright, pleasant fellow, and I remember was very popular with his messmates though he had been promoted (for his services in the Crimea) over most of their heads.

We sailed from Rio towards the latter part of December for the Pacific ocean. We had intended going through the Straits of Magellan, but for some reason the idea was abandoned when we got near the entrance; so passing through the Straits of Le Maire we rounded the much dreaded Cape Horn without encountering any bad weather, and arrived safely at Talcahuana, Chili, early in February, 1858. We remained here a couple of weeks to refit and paint ship. It is the seaport of the more important town of Concepcion, situated a few miles inland, and is a large and safe harbor. We gave our men liberty here—a watch at a time. They got into a row with the native police, or *vigilantes*, and many came off with cracked skulls.

We sailed from Talcahuana for Valparaiso, where news had been received of our being on the coast, and where our arrival was anxiously looked for. They had heard of the splendid new steam frigate *Merrimac*, and expected to see us dash into the port at the rate of twenty miles an hour; consequently when we were signalled every man, woman and child made haste to arrive at a point where they could view this magnificent spectacle. They feared the ship would arrive before they could reach the points selected. It is to be hoped they carried their dinners with them. We "slowed down" to about four knots an hour as soon as we made the land, and towards sunset *crept in*, and after making a "Judy Fitzsimmons" of ourselves, anchored so far out that if it had been at all hazy our arrival would not have been known in town.

This was our usual method of taking up an anchorage: but I have seen the *Ganges*, a ship of reasonable length and beam, run a half-mile inside of us under all sail and make a "flying moor," somewhat after the manner of the "ancients."

From Valparaiso we sailed for the Chincha islands. These islands lie a few miles off Pisco on the Peruvian coast, about 120 miles southeast of Callao. The custom house is at Pisco and all vessels going to the islands for guano enter and clear there.

The use of guano was known to the ancient Peruvians. Humboldt was one of the first by whom it was brought into notice in Europe, and its importation into England commenced about 1839. At the time of our visit there were forty or fifty American vessels here—all large, fine ships and all of which we boarded.

Nothing can be more dismal than the appearance of these islands, and nothing more horrible than living on them. Not a green thing to be seen—nothing but guano; the men live in it; they smell it, breathe it, and I suppose taste it in their food. The laborers were Chinese coolies, in charge of a few Peruvian soldiers. I was told that they would become so desperate that gangs of them would commit suicide together by joining hands and leaping from the cliffs into the sea. I could well believe it after a brief visit to the islands; and when a Chinaman once makes up his mind to take his life nothing will stop him. It is well known that when the Panama railroad was being built the Chinese would drown themselves *in two feet of water* by sticking their heads in the mud and keeping them there until life was extinct.

The coolies in Chili and Peru are (or at least were at this time) little better than slaves. They are brought over from China, where they are bought or kidnapped, and bound for a term of years. Very few live to return to their own country. I have been on board the Spanish vessels engaged in the coolie

trade, and with their armed officers, iron gratings over the hatchways, etc., they are *fac-similes* of the African slavers.

By the way, I frequently heard while on the coast that the first Chinese taken to Peru could communicate with the native Indian or *Cholo*. I do not know if this be true, but I heard it from several sources. That a point of so much importance should not excite much attention will not surprise those who know the very little interest these South Americans attach to anything relative to the former history of their country. Now I have very little doubt that North America was peopled by tribes coming from Asia by the way of Behring's Straits. They could have crossed in their canoes without trouble, and the climate probably modified the type of the North American Indian. More than one traveler has noticed the similarity of the Indians on different sides of the Straits; their customs, some of which are very peculiar, are the same. There is absolutely no reason for looking any further than this for the actual peopling of the continent.

But the Aztecs of Mexico, and the Children of the Sun in Peru, who were they? Chinese or Japanese in all probability. Chinese and Japanese junks have been wrecked and cast away on the coast of Oregon, we know; they are brought over by the *Kuro Siwo*, or Japan current, and a vessel could be drifted down the coast towards Mexico by the coast current. Supposing such to have been the case would it not be just like a Chinaman, with his intelligence and cunning, to take advantage of an ignorant tribe and announce himself as a superior being? This is my theory in regard to the matter: and it need not interfere with the theory that Yucatan was a Phœnician colony, as its monuments, etc., would seem to indicate. The equatorial current would carry a vessel there fast enough from the Canary Islands, which were known to the ancients certainly as far back as 140 B. C. Columbus found the mast or rudder of an European vessel at one of the West India islands!

When the *Merrimae* got to Callao, we found a revolution in

progress. The Peruvians had two fine screw frigates, the *Apurimac* and the *Amazonia*, and the party holding these commanded the coast. At this time Montero commanded the *Apurimac* and we heard much of him. The rumor was that he would attack Callao, so we were on the look-out for him. One fine morning I was surprised to see the frigate steaming quietly into port. Montero landed and went to Lima. There was no excitement—*Cosa de España*, I suppose. He gave up the ship, and no doubt got his reward. I expect it is the same Montero who now claims to be the President of Peru. He was considered an enterprising officer, and would have been a good one in a navy under proper discipline.

Lima, the City of the Kings, has been often described. I believe the name is a corruption of the Peruvian word *Rimac*, a river. It was founded by Pizarro, in 1535, who gave it the name of *Ciudad de los Reyes*. It has frequently suffered from earthquakes; in that of 1746 not more than twenty houses out of three thousand were left standing, and of twenty-three ships in the harbor of Callao nineteen were sunk. The town of Callao was utterly destroyed by a tidal wave during this earthquake; of four thousand inhabitants but two hundred escaped. The town was rebuilt farther back from the old site. Vessels now anchor where the first city stood. Lima is 700 feet above the sea and is to be seen from Callao, from which it is distant six or eight miles. A railroad connects the two cities. The city of Lima is beautifully laid out, and small streams of water, conducted from the river Rimac, contribute to its cleanliness. It has many fine public buildings, and on the plaza are situated the magnificent cathedral, the government house (once the vice-regal palace, where Pizarro was assassinated), and the hall of independence. The convent of the Franciscans, the mint, the palace of the inquisition, and the cabildo are all worthy of notice. Under the cathedral I saw the skeleton of Pizarro, at least the priest said it was Pizarro; and Mr. Clay, our minister, who had been a long time in the country said he saw no reason to doubt it. The

bones of the hands and feet had been carried off by visitors, and I am afraid that one of our party imitated this abominable example. There is much of interest to be seen in Lima, and I spent many hours in endeavoring to identify the places mentioned by Prescott and other writers, such as the stream the conspirators had to cross on their way to assassinate Pizarro, his palace, etc.

A friend told me he one day met a well-dressed man on the plaza and inquired of him if he could tell him where the palace of Pizarro formerly stood. "What Pizarro?" said the gentleman. "Why, the *great* Pizarro, the grand conqueror," replied my friend. "I do not know him," said the man, and, bowing politely, he walked off. In my visits to different parts of Central and South America and Mexico I have observed much ignorance exhibited by the inhabitants of the early history of their country. They not only do not know, but they seem to take no interest in learning anything about it. One can readily account for this. It is caused by the frequent revolutions. The schools are broken up; and the people, children included, are kept in a constant state of excitement. Why, what must be the condition of affairs in Peru at the present time?

The Chilians are better informed than most of these people. They are much better men; not on account of the climate, as some suppose, but because they have not intermarried to so great an extent with the negro and Indian. It is this which causes the degeneration of the white man. We hear a great deal of the regeneration of Mexico. It is all humbug; it is an absurdity if applied to the present inhabitants, because *it isn't in them!* What *is* a Mexican? Is he a Spaniard, or an Indian, or does the fact of a man's being born in Mexico, be he white, red or black, make him a Mexican? The best man in Mexico is the man of pure Spanish descent (very hard to find); the next best man is the pure Indian, and the next the pure negro. The mixed race is the worst and unfortunately by far the most numerous; and this applies to

every country on the continent south of the United States. The only regeneration of Mexico will be by throwing open the doors and introducing some millions of pure-blooded white men.

None of the Spanish American Republics, save perhaps Chili, are in as prosperous a condition as they were under the old Spanish rule. They want a strong government to keep them in order. Brazil is kept quiet by it; and Brazil has the most detestable population of all these countries.

We sailed from Callao in March and first stopped at Payta, some 480 miles up the coast. Payta is the site of an old Peruvian village, and I think Pizarro landed here in 1526 on his way to Cuzco. It is the seaport of the town of Piura, which lies in the midst of a fertile country; but Payta not only has no vegetation, but there is absolutely no fresh water within ten miles of it. All the water is brought from a river at that distance; and the road to it is strewed with the bones of dead donkeys: Sam Weller, to the contrary, notwithstanding. The dogs here have a hard time of it; they are forced to go to the river to drink, and by the time they get back home are so thirsty they have immediately to start back again; so that their lives are spent in travelling. I believe the English Steam Navigation Company have works here now and distil water for the inhabitants as well as for their steamers. Payta has a fine harbor and a good climate. It was taken and burned by Lord Anson in 1742, and before his time was several times sacked by the buccaneers.

Speaking of the buccaneers, I know of no more interesting reading than is to be found in the pages of Dampier, Ringrose, Wafer, Woods Rogers and others giving an account of their exploits on the western coast of North and South America in the latter part of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the next. Alexander Selkirk was a buccaneer who sailed with Captain Stradling in the Cinque Ports in 1703. Quarrelling with his captain he requested to be put on shore at the island of Juan Fernandez, which lies about 375 miles due west

of Valparaiso. He was landed in 1705 and remained solitary and alone until 1709, when he was taken off by Woods Rogers. He must have been a good hater; for it is said that when Captain Rogers sent a boat for him the first question he asked was whether Stradling was on board, for if he was he would remain on the island. Selkirk's adventure gave De Foe the idea of his romance of Robinson Crusoe, published in 1719, and Juan Fernandez is generally known as Crusoe's island; but in point of fact De Foe places his hero on one of the Windward or Carib islands; for his ship sailed from Brazil for the coast of Africa and was blown off her course by contrary winds. *N'importe.*

Dampier tells of a Mosquito Indian who passed three years alone on the island twenty years before Selkirk's time. He says: "March 22, 1684, we came in sight of Juan Fernandez and presently got out our canoe and went ashore to seek for a Mosquito Indian, whom we left here when chased hence by three Spanish ships in 1681, a little before we went to Arica. This Indian lived here alone above three years and although he was several times sought after by the Spaniards, who knew he was left on the island, yet they could never find him." After describing the manner in which this Indian contrived to live he says: "He saw our ship and came to the sea side to congratulate our safe arrival. And when we landed, a Mosquito Indian named Robin first leaped on shore and running to his brother Mosquitoman threw himself flat on his face at his feet, who helping him up and embracing him fell flat with his face on the ground at Robin's feet, and was by him taken up also. We stood with pleasure to behold the surprise, tenderness and solemnity of this interview which was exceedingly affectionate on both sides."

Juan Fernandez was discovered in 1567, and is named for its discoverer. It is at present a penal settlement belonging to Chili. It has no harbor. Dana in his "Two Years Before the Mast" gives a good description of it. Of all the buccaneers this man Dampier was the most remarkable. He wrote

a full account of his voyages, and his book not only abounds in nautical information, but is full of philosophical remarks. Nothing seemed to escape him, and his chapters on winds and currents may be read to advantage at the present day. He was born in Somersetshire, England, in 1652; served in the Dutch war in 1673; was an overseer of a plantation in Jamaica; and in 1675 was a logwood cutter in Campeachy. He gives an excellent description of the country and this trade. We then hear of him in Virginia, from whence he sailed to the coast of Africa, and thence to the South sea—from the South sea he went overland to the Caribbean sea, and home to England. He sailed again for the South sea, and gives a most interesting account of his operations on the west coast from Chiloe island, Chili, to Acapulco in Mexico. He then crossed the Pacific ocean to Nicobar and New Holland where he made valuable discoveries, and after remaining some time in the East Indies he returned to England, having been absent on his last voyage more than eight years.

The first circumnavigator of the globe was Magalhaens or Magellan as he is generally called, a Portuguese in the service of Spain. He sailed in 1519 and discovered the straits which bear his name. He sailed with a squadron of five ships, but only one succeeded in making the voyage. An account of the voyage was written by the Chevalier Pigafetta, an Italian, who accompanied Magellan as a volunteer. It is in this voyage that the first mention is made of the log line. Pigafetta gives an amusing account of the origin of the name Patagonia. He says that the natives with whom they communicated had their feet bound up in hides which made them so awkward in their movements that the sailors called them *patagones* (clumsy-footed)—hence Patagonia. The island of *Tierra del Fuego* was named from the large number of fires observed on the land.

The straits of Magellan were used by all the first circumnavigators, for Cape Horn was not discovered by Le Maire until 1616, nearly a hundred years after Magellan. The

Spaniards had a fort here, called Fort Famine, because the garrison perished for want. Magellan proceeded across the Pacific (which he so named from its smoothness) until he arrived at the Philippine islands. He remained there some time and taking sides with the natives in their wars was killed. His ship finally reached Spain under one of the subordinate officers by the way of the Cape of Good Hope, having been absent just three years and twenty-nine days. They had been long given up, and when they stated that they had "sailed round the world" were not believed. Upon examining the log-book it was found they were a day behind in their "reckoning," and this was to the scientific the best proof of their assertion, for as they sailed to the westward and had not corrected the "reckoning" by dropping a day at the 180th meridian (as is now the custom) they naturally were a day behind the time in Spain, or as sailors say had lost a day.

The first Englishman to sail round the world was Sir Francis Drake, in 1577–80, and to read the English accounts of him one would suppose he was really the first circumnavigator. The fact is the Spaniards sent many vessels to the Pacific ocean between Magellan's time and Drake's. One has only to read Navarrete's "Collection of Spanish Voyages" to be assured of this; and by the way, interesting as the books of Irving and Prescott are, they do not in my opinion compare with Navarrete's accounts of the early Spanish voyages to the South Sea and East Indies.

Some time after Magellan sailed the Spanish government commenced to send out vessels to look for him; and even Cortez, who had just completed the conquest of Mexico, actually built vessels at Tehuantepec and sent them to the East Indies on the same errand.

The Portuguese it will be remembered were prosecuting their discoveries by the way of the Cape of Good Hope, which had been doubled by Vasco de Gama in 1497. Vasco de Gama went to Goa on the west coast of Hindostan; and as I

have mentioned that Columbus found the rudder of a European ship in the West Indies, I will also mention that the natives of Goa told Vasco de Gama they had been visited by three ships similar to his before his arrival. Where did they come from and what became of them?

As the navigators of those days did not correct their "reckoning" at the 180th meridian, instances are known of islands in the East Indies where the people on the western end are a day ahead in their computation of those on the eastern end: the western end being discovered by the Portuguese sailing east, and the eastern end by the Spaniards sailing west.

I confess that in reading of the performances of the Spaniards in those early days I am filled with surprise. Cortez completed the conquest of Mexico in 1520, and a few years after we find him fitting out vessels to look for Magellan. The rapidity with which Cortez, Pizarro and their companions spread over the countries conquered by them is marvellous to read of. Alvarado, having conquered Guatemala, thinks nothing of going to Peru to join Pizarro. A few years after, we hear of his building ships and sailing for Navidad, in Mexico, to assist in suppressing an insurrection in Guadalajara. This is a long voyage for sailing ships at the present time.

He was killed near Colima by his horse rolling over a precipice. As for traveling across the country for hundreds of miles these men thought nothing of it. There were no roads, and any one who has seen an Indian cutting his way with his *machete* wonders how an armed man could ever pass. Acosta says that soon after the conquest of Peru the Spaniards were constantly crossing the isthmus of Darien, and penetrating the country towards Bogota. He says that men in armor and on horseback crossed the mountains by paths which a naked Indian of the present day can hardly travel on foot.

Whatever the old Boatswain may have said of iron men, the

old Spaniards were iron if ever men were. But after all it was the search for *gold* that made them iron.

As Hood sings:

"Gold! gold! gold! gold!
Bright and yellow, hard and cold;
Molten, graven, hammered and rolled;
Heavy to get, and light to hold;
Hoarded, bartered, bought, and sold,
Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled:
Spurned by the young, but hugged by the old
To the very verge of the church-yard mould;
Price of many a crime untold:
Gold! gold! gold! gold!
Good or bad a thousand fold!
How widely its agencies vary"——

CHAPTER XVII.

COOK'S VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES—ANSON'S VOYAGE AROUND THE WORLD—THE MUTINY OF THE BOUNTY—PANAMA—INDIAN NAMES AND THEIR SIGNIFICATION—TUMBEZ—CALLAO AGAIN—LIEUTENANT DENNY, R. N.—THE SANDWICH ISLANDS—REALEJO—NICARAGUA—CHINANDEGUA—A VOYAGE IN A BUNGO—PANAMA AGAIN—COMMODORE J. B. MONTGOMERY—VALPARAISO—THE "LEVANT"—THE "LANCASTER"—SAIL FOR HOME—RIO JANEIRO—JOHN BROWN'S RAID—THE FRIGATE CONGRESS—ARRIVAL AT NORFOLK.

THE first English circumnavigator was Drake; and he was followed by Cavendish, Cowley, Clipperton, Anson, Byron, Wallace, Carteret and Cook. The last was the most celebrated, and made three voyages. He made many important geographical discoveries; but of all his discoveries the most important was his establishing the fact that it was possible for a ship to make a long voyage without losing half her crew by the scurvy; such had been the case up to his time. He was killed by the natives of Owhyhee, Sandwich Islands, in 1779.

But of all these early voyages, commend me to the history of Lord Anson's voyage, as related by the Chaplain of the *Centurion*. It is simply a romance from beginning to end. Anson left England September 18th, 1740, with eight vessels—the *Centurion*, *Severn*, *Gloucester*, *Wager*, *Pearl*, *Tryal*, and two store-ships,—the object of the expedition being to attack the Spanish vessels in the South Sea.

The vessels separated off Cape Horn, where they experienced frightful weather. Here the *Severn* and *Pearl* put back to England, and the *Wager* was wrecked on the coast of Patagonia, north of the Straits of Magellan. Byron, afterwards a commodore and a circumnavigator, was a midshipman on board, and wrote an account of the shipwreck and subsequent sufferings of the crew. His book, called "Byron's Narrative," is a