

like St. Thomas, that the coming late was a greater gain than being in time?"—"God grant it, and God bless you!"

O'MEARA.

KATHLEEN O'MEARA, an Irish writer of the present day. Under the pseudonym "Grace Ramsay," she has published several tales and novelettes of real excellence; among them "The Bells of the Sanctuary," "A Woman's Trials," "Iza's Story," "Mary Benedicta," etc. Recently turning her pen to graver uses, she has written under her own name, and her memoir of Bishop Grant of Southwark and her life of Frederic Ozanam have received high and well-deserved commendation.

III.

63. HERVÉ RIEL.

1.

ON the sea and at the Hogue,¹ sixteen hundred ninety-two,
Did the English fight the French—woe to France!
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks pursue,
Came crowding ship on ship to St. Milo on the Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

2.

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in full chase,
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship, Damfreville;
Close on him fled, great and small, twenty-two good ships in all;
And they signalled to the place, "Help the winners of a race!
Get us guidance, give us harbor, take us quick—or, quicker still,
Here's the English can and will!"

3.

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leaped on board;
"Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to pass?"
laughed they:
"Rocks to starboard,² rocks to port,³ all the passage scarred and
scored,

¹ Cape La Hogue, 10 miles N. E. of Valognes, France, off which the united English and Dutch fleets defeated the French naval force, as referred to above, May 19-23, 1692.

² Starboard, the right-hand side of a ship or boat, to a person looking forward.

³ Port, now used instead of larboard, or opposed to starboard.

Shall the Formidable here with her twelve and eighty guns
Think to make the river-mouth by the single narrow way,
Trust to enter where 'tis ticklish for a craft of twenty tons,
And with flow at full beside? now 'tis slackest ebb of tide.
Reach the mooring? Rather say, while rock stands or water runs,
Not a ship will leave the bay!"

4.

Then was called a council straight; brief and bitter the debate:
"Here's the English at our heels; would you have them take in tow
All that's left us of the fleet, linked together stern and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound? better run the ships aground!"
(Ended Damfreville his speech.)
"Not a minute more to wait! let the captains all and each
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on the beach!
France must undergo her fate."

5.

"Give the word!"—But no such word was ever spoke or heard;
For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid all these—
A captain? A lieutenant? A mate—first, second, third?
No such man of mark, and meet with his betters to compete!
But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville for the fleet—
A poor coasting pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisickese.

6.

And "What mockery or malice have we here?" cries Hervé Riel;
"Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you cowards, fools, or
rogues?
Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the soundings, tell
On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell
'Twill be the offering here and Grève, where the river disembogues?
Are you bought by English gold? Is it love the lying's for?
Morn and eve, night and day, have I piloted your bay,
Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.

7.

"Burn the fleet, and ruin France? That were worse than fifty
Hogues!
Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs, believe me there's a way!
Only let me lead the line,
Have the biggest ship to steer, get this Formidable clear,

Make the others follow mine,
And I lead them most and least by a passage I know well,
Right to Solidor, past Grève, and there lay them safe and sound;
And if one ship misbehave—keel so much as grate the ground—
Why, I've nothing but my life: here's my head!" cries Hervé Riel.

8.

Not a minute more to wait, "Steer us in, then, small and great!
Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron!" cried its chief.
Captains, give the sailor place! he is admiral, in brief.
Still the North wind, by God's grace! see the noble fellow's face
As the big ship, with a bound, clears the entry like a hound,
Keeps the passage as its inch of way were the wide sea's profound!
See, safe through shoal and rock, how they follow in a flock.
Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the ground,

Not a spar that comes to grief!
The peril, see, is past, all are harbored to the last,
And just as Hervé Riel hollos "Anchor!"—sure as fate,
Up the English come, too late.

9.

So the storm subsides to calm:
They see the green trees wave on the hights o'erlooking Grève:
Hearts that bled are stanch'd with balm.
"Just our rapture to enhance, let the English rake the bay,
Gnash their teeth and glare askance, as they cannonade away!
'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the Rance!"
How hope succeeds despair on each captain's countenance!
Outburst all with one accord,— "This is Paradise for Hell!

Let France, let France's king
Thank the man that did the thing!"
What a shout, and all one word, "Hervé Riel,"
As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise in the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

10.

Then said Damfreville, "My friend, I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard:
Praise is deeper than the lips; you have saved the king his ships,
You must name your own reward.

'Faith, our sun was near eclipse!
Demand whate'er you will, France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content, and have! or my name's not Damfreville."

11.

Then a beam of fun outbroke on the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through those frank eyes of Breton
blue:

"Since I needs must say my say, since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is it but a run?—
Since 'tis ask and have, I may—since the others go ashore—
Come! A good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the Belle Auröre!"
That he asked, and that he got—nothing more.

12.

Name and deed alike are lost: not a pillar nor a post
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell;
Not a head in white and black on a single fishing-smack,
In memory of the man but for whom had gone to wrack
All that France saved from the fight whence England bore the bell.
Go to Paris; rank on rank
Search the heroes flung pell-mell
On the Louvre, face and flank;
You shall look long enough ere you come to Hervé Riel.
So, for better and for worse, Hervé Riel, accept my verse!
In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once more
Save the squadron, honor France, love thy wife the Belle Aurore!

ROBERT BROWNING.

IV.

64. RECAPTURE OF THE PHILADELPHIA.

[During the first term of the Presidency of THOMAS JEFFERSON, 1803 to 1805, the insolence of the piratical states on the Barbary coast was humbled by the bombardment of Tripoli and the invasion of that state by a land force. The frigate PHILADELPHIA, while chasing one of the enemy's vessels, struck on a reef, in the harbor of Tripoli, and in consequence was captured, and her crew sold into slavery. She was soon after recaptured and destroyed, as described below.]

THE Philadelphiä lay not quite a mile within the entrance,
riding to the wind, and abreast of the town. Her fore-
mast, which had been cut away while she was on the reef, had

not yet been replaced, her main and mizzen¹ top-masts were hoisted, and her lower yards were on the gunwales.² Her lower standing rigging, however, was in its place, and, as was shortly afterward ascertained, her guns were loaded and shotted. Just within her, lay two cor'sairs, with a few gun-boats and a galley.

2. It was a mild evening for the season, and the sea and bay were smooth as in summer; as unlike as possible to the same place a few days previously, when the two vessels had been driven from the enterprise by a tempest. Perceiving that he was likely to get in too soon, when about five miles from the rocks, Mr. Decatur³ ordered buckets and other drags to be towed astern, in order to lessen the way of the ketch⁴ without shortening sail, as the latter expedient would have been seen from the port, and must have awakened suspicion. In the meantime the wind gradually fell, until it became so light as to leave the ketch but about two knots' way on her, when the drags were removed.

3. About ten o'clock the Intrepid reached the eastern entrance of the bay, or the passage between the rocks and the shoal. The wind was nearly east, and, as she steered directly for the frigate, it was well abaft⁵ the beam. There was a young moon, and as these bold adventurers were slowly advancing into a hostile port, all around them was tranquil and apparently without distrust. For near an hour they were stealing slowly along, the air gradually falling, until their motion became scarcely perceptible.

4. Most of the officers and men of the ketch had been ordered to lie on the deck, where they were concealed by low bulwarks, or weather-boards, and by the different objects that belong to a vessel. As it is the practice of those seas to carry a number of men even in the smallest craft, the appearance of ten or twelve

¹ **Mizzen** (miz' zn), hindmost; nearest the stern.

² **Gunwale** (gün' nel), the uppermost wall, or upper edge of a ship's side.

³ **Stephen Decatur, jr.**, a commodore in the U. S. navy, son of the first commodore of the name, was born at Sinnepuxent, Md., Jan. 5, 1779, and was killed in a duel, March 22, 1820. He was one of the bravest

and most highly esteemed of all our naval officers.

⁴ **Ketch**, a vessel with two masts, usually from 100 to 250 tons burden.

⁵ **Abaft** (a bäft'), toward the stern; back of; *abaft the beam*, in an arc of the horizon, between a line that crosses a ship in the direction of her beams, and that point of the compass toward which her stern is directed.

would excite no alarm, and this number was visible. The commanding officer himself stood near the pilot, Mr. Catalano, who was to act as interpreter. The quartermaster at the helm was ordered to stand directly for the frigate's bows, it being the intention to lay the ship aboard in that place, as the mode of attack which would least expose the assailants to her fire.

5. The Intrepid was still at a considerable distance from the Philadelphia, when the latter hailed. The pilot answered that the ketch belonged to Malta, and was on a trading voyage; that she had been nearly wrecked, and had lost her anchors in the late gale, and that her commander wished to ride by the frigate during the night. This conversation lasted some time, Mr. Decatur instructing the pilot to tell the frigate's people with what he was laden, in order to amuse them; and the Intrepid gradually drew nearer, until there was every prospect of her running foul of the Philadelphia, in a minute or two, and at the very spot contemplated.¹

6. But the wind suddenly shifted and took the ketch aback. The instant the southerly puff struck her, her head fell off, and she got a stern-board; the ship, at the same moment, tending to the new current of air. The effect of this unexpected change was to bring the ketch directly under the frigate's broadside, at the distance of about forty yards, where she lay perfectly becalmed, or, if anything, drifting slowly astern, exposed to nearly every one of the Philadelphia's larboard² guns. Not the smallest suspicion appears to have been yet excited on board the frigate, though several of her people were looking over the rails; and, notwithstanding the moonlight, so completely were the Turks deceived, that they lowered a boat, and sent it with a fast.

7. Some of the ketch's men, in the meantime, had got into her boat, and had run a line to the frigate's fore-chains. As they returned they met the frigate's boat, took the fast it brought, which came from the after part of the ship, and passed it into their own vessel. These fasts were put into the hands of the men, as they lay on the ketch's deck, and they began cautiously to breast the Intrepid alongside of the Philadelphia, without rising. As soon as the latter got near enough to the ship, the Turks discovered

¹ **Contemplated** (kõntëm'plät'ëd). of a ship, when a person stands

² **Lar' board**, the left-hand side with his face to the head.

her anchors, and they sternly ordered the ketch to keep off, as she had deceived them; preparing, at the same time, to cut the fasts. All this passed in a moment, when the cry of "Amerikanos!" was heard in the ship. The people of the Intrepid, by a strong pull, brought their vessel alongside of the frigate, where she was secured, quick as thought.

8. Up to this moment not a whisper had betrayed the presence of the men concealed. The instructions had been positive to keep quiet until commanded to show themselves, and no precipitation, even in that trying moment, deranged the plan. Lieutenant-commander Decatur was standing ready for a spring, with Messrs. Laws and Morris quite near him. As soon as close enough, he jumped at the frigate's chain-plates, and, while clinging to the ship himself, he gave the order to board. The two midshipmen were at his side, and all the officers and men of the Intrepid arose and followed. The three gentlemen named were in the chains together, and Lieutenant-commander Decatur and Mr. Morris sprang at the rail above them, while Mr. Laws dashed at a port. To the latter would have belonged the honor of having been first in this gallant assault; but wearing a boarding-belt, his pistols were caught between the gun and the side of the port. Mr. Decatur's foot slipped in springing, and Mr. Charles Morris first stood upon the quarter-deck of the Philadelphia. In an instant, Lieutenant-commander Decatur and Mr. Laws were at his side, while heads and bodies appeared coming over the rail, and through the ports, in all directions.

9. The surprise seems to have been as perfect, as the assault was rapid and earnest. Most of the Turks on deck crowded forward, and all ran over to the starboard side, as their enemies poured in on the larboard. A few were aft, but as soon as charged they leaped into the sea. Indeed, the constant plunges into the water gave the assailants the assurance that their enemies were fast lessening in numbers by flight. It took but a minute or two to clear the spar-deck, though there was more of a struggle below. Still, so admirably managed was the attack, and so complete the surprise, that the resistance was but trifling.

10. In less than ten minutes Mr. Decatur was on the quarter-deck again, in undisturbed possession of his prize. There can be

no doubt that this gallant officer now felt bitter regrets that it was not in his power to bring away the ship he had so nobly recovered. Not only were his orders on this point peremptory,¹ however, but the frigate had not a sail bent, nor a yard crossed, and she wanted her foremast. It was next to impossible, therefore, to remove her, and the command was given to pass up the combustibles from the ketch. The duty of setting fire to the prize appears to have been executed with as much promptitude and order as every other part of the service. The officers distributed themselves, agreeably to the previous instructions, and the men soon appeared with the necessary means.

11. Each party acted by itself, and as it got ready. So rapid were they all in their movements, that the men with combustibles had scarcely time to get as low as the cockpit and after store-rooms, before the fires were lighted over their heads. When the officer intrusted with the duty last mentioned had got through, he found the after-hatches filled with smoke from the fire in the ward-room and steerage, and he was obliged to make his escape by the forward ladder. The Americans were in the ship from twenty to twenty-five minutes, and they were literally driven out of her by the flames. The vessel had got to be so dry in that low latitude, that she burnt like pine; and the combustibles had been as judiciously prepared as they were steadily used. The last party up were the people who had been in the store-rooms, and when they had reached the deck they found most of their companions in the Intrepid. Joining them, and ascertaining that all was ready, the order was given to cast off.

12. Notwithstanding the daring character of the enterprise in general, Mr. Decatur and his party now ran the greatest risks they had incurred that night. So fierce had the conflagration already become, that the flames began to pour out of the ports, and the head-fast having been cast off, the ketch fell astern, with her jigger flapping against the quarter-gallery, and her boom² foul. The fire showed itself in the window at this critical moment; and beneath was all the ammunition of the party, covered

¹ *Për' emp to rý*, forbidding debate or remonstrance; positive.

² *Boom* (*bòm*), a long spar or pole, run out from various parts of a vessel for the purpose of extending the bottom of particular sails.

with a tarpau'lin.¹ To increase the risk, the stern-fast was jammed. By using *swōrds*, however (for there was not time to look for an ax), the *hawser*² was cut, and the Intrepid was extricated from the most imminent danger by a vigorous shove. As she swung clear of the frigate the flames reached the rigging, up which they went hissing, like a rocket, the tar having oozed from the ropes, which had been saturated with that inflammable matter. Matches could not have kindled with greater quickness.

13. The sweeps³ were now manned. Up to this moment everything had been done earnestly, though without noise; but as soon as they felt that they had command of their ketch again, and by two or three vigorous strokes had sent her away from the frigate, the people of the Intrepid ceased rowing, and as one man they gave three cheers for victory. This appeared to arouse the Turks from their stupor, for the cry had hardly ended when the batteries, the two corsairs, and the galley, poured in their fire. The men laid hold of their sweeps again, of which the Intrepid had eight of a side, and favored by a light air, they went merrily down the harbor.

14. The spectacle that followed is described as having been both beautiful and sublime. The entire bay was illuminated by the conflagration, the roar of cannon was constant, and Trip'oli was in a clamor. The appearance of the ship was, in the highest degree, magnificent; and to add to the effect, as her guns heated, they began to go off. Owing to the shift of the wind, and the position into which she had tended, she, in some measure, returned the enemy's fire, as one of her own broadsides was discharged in the direction of the town, and the other toward Fort English. The most singular effect of this conflagration was on board the ship; for the flames having run up the rigging and masts, collected under the tops, and fell over, giving the whole the appearance of glowing columns and fiery capitals.

15. Under ordinary circumstances, the situation of the ketch would still have been thought sufficiently perilous; but after the

¹ Tarpaulin (tār pa' līn), canvas covered with tar, or a composition, to render it water-proof.

² Haws'er, a large rope.

³ Sweep, a large oar, used in small vessels to impel them during a calm, or to increase their speed during a chase.

exploit they had just performed, her people, elated with success, regarded all that was now passing as a triumphant spectacle.¹ The shot constantly cast the spray around them, or were whistling over their heads; but the only sensation they produced, was by calling attention to the brilliant *jets d'eau*² that they occasioned as they bounded along the water. Only one struck the Intrepid, although she was within half a mile of many of the heaviest guns for some time; and that passed through her top-gallant sail.

16. With sixteen sweeps and eighty men elated with success, Mr. Decatur was enabled to drive the little Intrepid ahead with a velocity that rendered towing useless. Near the harbor's mouth he met the Siren's boats, sent to cover his retreat; but their services were scarcely necessary. The success of this gallant exploit laid the foundation of the name which Mr. Decatur subsequently acquired in the navy. The country applauded the feat generally; and the commanding officer was raised from the station of a lieutenant to that of a captain. Most of the midshipmen engaged were also promoted. Lieutenant-commander Decatur also received a *swōrd*.

COOPER.

JAMES FENNIMORE COOPER, the celebrated American novelist, was born at Burlington, New Jersey, in 1789. His father, Judge William Cooper, born in Pennsylvania, became possessed, in 1785, of a large tract of land near Otsego Lake, in the State of New York, where, in the spring of 1786, he erected the first house in Cooperstown. Here the novelist chiefly passed his boyhood to his thirteenth year, and became perfectly conversant with frontier life. At that early age he entered Yale College, where he remained three years, when he obtained a midshipman's commission and entered the navy. He passed the six following years in that service, and thus became master of the second great field of his future literary career. In 1811 he resigned his commission, married Miss Delancey, a descendant of one of the oldest and most influential families in America, and settled down to a home life in Westchester, near New York, where he resided for a short time before removing to Cooperstown. Here he wrote his first book, "Precaution." This was followed, in 1821, by "The Spy," one of the best of all historical romances. It was almost immediately republished in all parts of Europe. It was followed, two years later, by "The Pioneers," "The Pilot," the first of his sea novels, next appeared. It is one of the most remarkable novels of the time, and everywhere obtained instant and high applause. In 1826 he visited Europe, where his reputation was already well established as one of the greatest writers of romantic fiction which our age has produced. He passed several years abroad, and was warmly welcomed in every country he visited. His literary activity was not impaired by his change of scene, as several of his best works were written while travelling. He returned home in 1833. His writings throughout are distinguished by purity and brilliancy of no common merit. He was alike remarkable for his fine commanding person, his manly, resolute, independent nature, and his noble, generous heart. He died at Cooperstown, September 14, 1851.

¹ Spectacle (spĕk' ta kl).

water spouting upwards from a

² Jets d'eau (zhā dō'), streams of fountain or pipe, for ornament.

V.

65. COLUMBUS.

THE crimson sun was sinking down to rest,
 Pavilioned on the cloudy verge of heaven;
 And Ocean on her gently heaving breast
 Caught, and flashed back, the varying tints of even;
 When, on a fragment from the tall cliff riven,
 With folded arms, and doubtful thoughts opprest,
 Columbus sat; till sudden hope was given:
 A ray of gladness shooting from the West.
 O what a glorious vision for mankind
 Then dawned above the twilight of his mind;
 Thoughts shadowy still, but indistinctly grand!
 There stood his Genius,¹ face to face; and signed
 (So legends tell) far seaward with her hand:
 Till a new world sprang up, and bloomed beneath her wand

2. He was a man whom danger could not daunt,
 Nor sophistry perplex, nor pain subdue;
 A stoic, reckless of the world's vain taunt,
 And steeled the path of honor to pursue.
 So, when by all deserted, still he knew
 How best to soothe the heartsick, or confront
 Seditious; schooled with equal eye to view
 The frowns of grief and the base pangs of want.
 But when he saw that promised land arise
 In all its rare and bright varieties,
 Lovelier than fondest fancy ever trod,
 Then softening nature melted in his eyes;
 He knew his fame was full, and blessed his God;
 And fell upon his face, and kissed the virgin sod.
3. Beautiful realm beyond the western main,
 That hymns thee ever with resounding wave,
 Thine is the glorious sun's peculiar reign!
 Fruits, flowers, and gems, in rich mosaic pave

¹ *Gen'ius*, his guardian angel; in heathen mythology, the genius was supposed to be either a good or evil spirit, appointed to watch over the destinies of a man, a tribe, or a nation.

Thy paths: like giant altars o'er the plain
 Thy mountains blaze, loud thundering, 'mid the rave
 Of mighty streams, that shoreward rush amain,
 Like Polyphemus¹ from his Etnean cave.
 Joy, joy for Spain! a seaman's hand confers
 These glorious gifts, and half the world is hers!
 But where is he—that light whose radiance glows
 The load-star of succeeding mariners?
 Behold him! crushed beneath o'ermastering woes—
 Hopeless, heart-broken, chained, abandoned to his foes!

SIR AUBREY DE VERE

SECTION XVI.

I.

66. THE LITERARY ARTIST.

PART FIRST.

EVERY age is characterized by some intellectual ^{signal} trait. It has been already perceived that the prevailing tone of ours is scientific. Progress in industry and the mechanical arts is more highly prized than purely literary ability. True, there is still much written which is ^{noted as} labeled literature. But few, very few indeed, of the many thousand volumes that are yearly flooding the reading world bear the impress that ranks them among the enduring ^{monuments} monuments of intellect; very few ^{merit} deserve the title of classics; the greater number are explosive bubbles on the stream of thought. They are so, not through any lack of talent, but rather through its misapplication.

2. The reason of this is to be found in the spirit of ^{trifling} trifling that possesses the age. Time is wasted and energies are expended in the endeavor to move over a large surface of attainments; and as slight account is made of profoundness of knowledge, the results are not at all in keeping with the motive

¹ *Polyphemus*, son of Neptune, and one of the Cyclopes in Sicily.