

## THE FLORIDA AND MAFFIT.

## THE ADVENTURES OF A PRIVATEER.

A correspondent of the London Times writing from Brest, (France) gives an account of his visit to the Confederate steamer Florida, while she was lying at Brest for repairs, which is not without interest:

"I found some of the officers of the Florida at the Hotel de Nantes (Rue d'Aiguillon). Lieut. Langard Hoole (a young man, who apparently did not number more than three-and-twenty years) received us courteously, and gave us his card to assure us admission on board. He stated, however, that his superior officer, Capt. Maffit, was generally to be found on board his vessel, and would be glad to see us. The frankness, courtesy, and total absence of boasting manifested by this young officer impressed us most favorably. All the next day it blew a gale of wind in the Rade, and we could not find a boat to venture out. To-day, however, the weather was propitious, and early morning found us alongside the Florida. We sent our cards to Capt. Maffit, and were immediately admitted on board, the Captain himself coming to the top of the companion to receive us. Directly Capt. Maffit understood that we were British subjects he invited us below into his little cabin, and when I told him that there were many people in England who regarded his career with great interest, he entered very freely into a recital of his adventures. I will here subjoin a copy of some notes which Capt. Maffit subsequently handed to me relative to the career of the Florida, promising, at the same time, a continuation, which has not yet arrived. They are as follows:

"The Confederate States steamer Florida, Commander J. N. Maffit.—This steamer was built in Liverpool, and sent to Nassau in April, 1863; was put in the Admiralty Court; cleared on the 6th of August, when her present commander took charge, with 18 men, went to sea, with her tender, and received guns, etc. On the 6th of August the yellow fever appeared on board, and Captain Maffit had to perform surgeon's duty, until necessity forced the vessel into Cardenas. There she lost nearly all her crew, her paymaster, and 3d engineer. She ran the blockade of Havana in and out, and on the 4th of September appeared off Mobile. The entire blockading fleet put after her. Capt. Maffit was brought up from a bed of sickness (yellow fever) to take her in. For two hours and 48 minutes she was under a close fire. All the crew were sent below, and the officers only remained on deck, for she had but 11 men on duty, and her guns were not furnished with rammers, quoins, beds, or sights; in fact, she was a most helpless. Three heavy shots struck her hull. One shell struck her amidships and passed through, killing one man and wounding seven. Her standing rigging was shot away, and some 1,500 shrapnel shot struck her hull and masts."

So far the notes, which Capt. Maffit has as yet found time to send me. Of the Captain himself I may say that he is a slight, middle-sized, well-knit man, of about 42; a merry-looking man, with a ready, determined air, full of life and business. There are 100 able seamen on board the Florida, and about 13 officers. Four fine fellows are from the neighborhood of Brest. Capt. Maffit says that he has hardly ever taken a prize but what some of the crew of the prize have come forward to say, "Should like to serve with you, sir." Generally speaking, he has to refuse; but if he sees a very likely fellow he takes him on. Capt. Maffit was a Lieutenant of the United States navy before the outbreak, and in that capacity distinguished himself greatly. In 1858 he commanded the brig Dolphin, when he captured the slave Echo, with 400 slaves on board, and took her into Charleston. For this feat his health was drunk at a public dinner at Liverpool; and it is a curious fact, for those who maintain that the civil war in America is founded upon the slave question, that the commander of this important Confederate cruiser should be the very man who has distinguished himself actively against the slave trade. In 1859 Capt. Maffit commanded the United States steamer Crusader, and captured four slaves.

The only broadside which the Florida has fired in anger was against the Ericsson, an armed merchant man, which she encountered some 40 miles from New York. The Ericsson, a very large vessel, did not reply, but made the best of her way off, and succeeded in escaping. When they ventured within 40 miles of New York they did not know that the arrival of the Tacony (one of their "outfits") had put the New Yorkers on their guard, and they soon found that there were about 70 armed vessels out searching for them, and so were glad to retreat. "We never seek a fight," said Captain Maffit, "and we don't avoid one. You see we have only two vessels against 1,500; so we should stand a poor chance. Our object is merely to destroy their commerce, so as to bring about a peace. We have taken, altogether, 72 prizes, and estimate the value at about \$15,000,000. The Jacob Bell alone was worth \$2,100,000." The Captain exhibited a book in which all the prizes were regularly entered and all particulars relating thereto. He explained that their mode of procedure was to burn and destroy the property of the Northern States wherever they found it. I asked if they took gold and precious articles, and the reply was, "Pretty quick, when we get them." The

papers of the burnt prizes are all kept and a valuation is made before the destruction of the vessels, in the expectation that when peace is restored the Confederate Government will make an appropriation of money equivalent to the claims of the captors. In consequence of this arrangement there is very little actual treasure on board the Florida, and the officers and crew are working mainly on the faith of the future independence and solvency of the Confederacy. "Any way," said Capt. Maffit, "we have cost the Government very little, for we've lived on the enemy. On, yes, we've served them out beautifully." In reply to some questions as to the method of capture, the captain said, "We only make war with the United States Government, and we respect little property. We treat prisoners of war with the greatest respect. Most of those whom we have captured have spoken well of us. To be sure, we have met with some ungrateful rascals; but you meet with those all the world over."

When the Florida came into Brest she had been at sea for eight months, without spending more than four entire days in port. Before entering the port of Brest she had not been more than 24 hours in any one port, although she had visited Nassau, Bermuda, Pernambuco and Sierra (Brazil). "Yes, indeed, sir," said the Captain, "245 days upon solid junk, without repairs or provision." During all this time they have only lost 15 men, including those who were killed and wounded at Mobile, the paymaster (who died of consumption) and one officer (who was accidentally drowned.) They have come into Brest to repair the engines, which are somewhat out of order, the shaft being quite out of line. The Emperor has given orders that the Florida is to be admitted into the port for all her necessary repairs, and she is to be supplied with everything she may require except munitions of war.

Captain Maffit showed us over his ship, which was in pretty good order considering the eight months almost uninterrupted cruise, and he presented us both with a photographic picture of her, which was taken at Bermuda. The Florida mounts only eight guns—ix 48-pounders, of the Blakeley pattern, made at Low Moor, and stern and bow chasers.

On taking our leave I asked Capt. Maffit whether he expected to be intercepted on leaving Brest, pointing at the same time to the Goulet, the narrow passage which affords the only ingress and egress to and from the Rade. "Well," replied he, "I expect there will be seven or eight of them out there before long, but I'm not afraid. I've run eight blockades already, and it'll go hard but I'll run the ninth."

## PRESIDENT LINCOLN ON SHAKSPEARE.

The following private letter, which has somehow "got into print"—probably through the vanity of Mr. Hackett—has been used to throw ridicule on "Honest Abe":

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
WASHINGTON, August 17.

MY DEAR SIR:—Months ago I should have acknowledged the receipt of your book and accompanying kind note, and I now have to beg your pardon for not having done so.

For one of my age I have seen very little of the drama. The first presentation of *Falstaff* I ever saw was yours here last winter or spring. Perhaps the best compliment I can pay is to say, as I truly can, I am very anxious to see it again. Some of *Shakspeare's* plays I have never read, whilst others I have gone over perhaps as frequently as any professional reader. Among the latter are *Lea*, *Richard the Third*, *Henry the Eighth*, *Hamlet*, and especially *Macbeth*. I think none equals *Macbeth*. It is wonderful. Unlike you gentlemen of the profession, I think the soliloquy in *Hamlet* commencing, "O my offence is rank," surpasses that commencing "To be or not to be." But pardon this attempt at criticism. I should like to hear you pronounce the opening speech of *Richard the Third*.

Will you not soon visit Washington again? If you do, please call and let me make your personal acquaintance.

Yours, truly,

A. LINCOLN.

James H. Hackett, Esq.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

FAMILY NAMES.—It is a vulgar notion that some names are necessarily noble and romantic, while others are necessarily mean and base. Names are beautiful only in their associations. Worth, valor, genius, learning, have converted syllables into poems, and words into histories. Look the British Peerage through, and in that bright list there is, perhaps, not one which does not seem to the eye and the imagination, picturesque. Yet, in their beginnings, most of them had nothing in sound or in spelling that could be considered glorious. Howard is a hog-ward; Seymour is a tailor; Leicester is a weaver; Percy is a gross fellow; Butler is a cellar man; Stewart is a domestic servant. Vaen, Vere, Hyde and Pole, sound the reverse of heroic. Hay is not intrinsically nobler than straw. How, then, that Hay has come to represent the pink of aristocracy, Straw the lowest of vulgar cheats? Simply by association. Would the complainants like to have been originally called Blunt, Craven or Gore? There is nothing in Gray more attractive than Brown, as to either sound or letters; indeed Gray is a shade or so less

vigorous than its rival Brown. Would any one like to have been known as Roper or Touchet, if these familiar names had never been immortalized by worthy deeds? We do not know that Gimet has a more familiar look than Petty, Peel and Pitt. Yet these have become by association some of the most reverential and gracious of names. Milton, Sackville and Shelly are not necessarily aristocratic and poetical. Had they been glorified by genius and by rank, they would perhaps have been included in Mr. Bugey's list. Churchill, Fuller, Kidd, Quarles, Donne, Bowles, Savage, Quincy, and Dickens, now household words, borne by some of the choicest of our national poets and humorists, would certainly have been so. Not much better as to sound are Cowper, Lamb, and Bulwer. People used to laugh and joke at Cecil Talbot and Talmash would be considered vulgar. Every one considers Raleigh a romantic name, but in Sir Walter's time it was open to very bad puns. The same with Drake.

Coke, too, would be thought low, had it never been illustrated by the author of the "Institutes," and the owner of Holkham. In the absence of Sir Christopher, would Mr. Tigg like to have been called Wren? Had there been no erudite giant of that name, would not Cheeke have been voted intolerable? In truth, scarcely anything depends on the letter, everything on the connection of ideas. Solomon was the wisest of men, and his name is one of the noblest in literature; yet no prudent father, unless he were a Jew, would give it to his child, because in the present generation it happens to be ludicrously associated with old clothes. In its Saracenic form of Solymán it would still be considered magnificent. A current jest will destroy the picturesque beauty of the most famous names; a living Pompey would be set down as a nigger, a living Caesar treated as a dog; Cymon is a name which would attract the female eye, and, perhaps, even reconcile it to the adjunct Smyth. Mrs. Cymon Smyth would have an air upon a card. But the fine feminine instinct would recoil from Simon. And why the difference? Is it not because Cymon is associated with Iphigenia and Simon with a simoleon who met a pisan coming from a fair? One of the objectionable names, to remove which from the face of the earth, all gods and men are called to aid, is Vilain. Yet the Hog wards and Sty wards were all Vilains; and one of the proudest houses of Europe, that of Count Vilain the Fourteenth, rejoices in the obnoxious name.—[London Athenæum.

DIET FOR DIARRHEA.—Roast some rice as you would coffee; then grind it in a coffee-mill; dissolve two ounces of gum arabic in one pint of hot water; when dissolved put in a teacup of rice and let it boil twenty minutes, or until it is the consistency of mush, (if too thick, as you use it, thin it with hot water.) I saw a desperate case cured by this most valuable remedy. (A teacupful of toasted and then ground rice to two ounces of gum arabic dissolved in one pint of water and then boiled twenty minutes.)

MEMORIAL OF GETTYSBURG.—The trunks of two trees have been sent from the Battlefield of Gettysburg—one for the Pennsylvania Historical Society, the other for the historical Society of Massachusetts. The trees were growing in a part of the field where the fiercest encounter took place, as shown by the fact that one of them has two hundred and fifty bullet holes in the trunk within the space of twenty-one feet; the other has one hundred and ten bullet holes in about the same space. The trunks are not more than twelve or thirteen inches in diameter.

LADY HAMILTON.—Alexander Dumas is said to be engaged on a semi-authentic romance; entitled "Emma Lyons," in which he shows forth the life of Lord Nelson's Lady Hamilton, with all its witchery at Naples and its misery at its close, and which is just the theme for the pen of that celebrated novelist. It will appear in English three months before the original French text is published.

WINTER CAMPAIGN IN POLAND.—The Polish insurgents are now busy forming "A Winter army," which will be divided into two corps, and hold two positions till the Spring, when hostilities are likely to be renewed and carried on with more violence than ever. The Poles are dissatisfied that the great Powers kept them so long in a state of uncertainty as to the assistance they might render, but do not seem at all discouraged that an armed intervention has not taken place. The insurgent bands are everywhere augmented by the accession of recruits, and even the Russians themselves entertain no idea that the Winter will crush out the rebellion. A list has been published of three hundred and ninety-seven persons whose property has been sequestered up to the 4th of July last, in the government of Wilna alone; the list includes men and women of every grade of society.

THE FATHER OF MODERN REPORTING.—The September number of *London Society* has an interesting paper on "Newspaper Editors and Reporters," in which we find the following paragraphs respecting "Memory Woodfall," known in England as the "Father of Modern Reporting":

It was his practice to go down early to the House of Commons and secure for himself a favorite corner in the front row of the strangers' gallery. There he sat the long night through, never budging from his place, solacing himself as he grew faint with the indigestible but portable dainties of a hard-boiled egg,

and with his eyes and his attention fixed upon the various speakers, but without taking a single note; the appearance of a notebook or pencil would have led to immediate expulsion by the sergeant-at-arms or his messengers. He would absorb, as it were, the whole scene passing before him, and would reproduce it on paper to the extent of several columns in time for the publication of the following evening. In this way he gave a character to the *Chronicle* which raised it far above all its contemporaries.

Other papers, of course, followed in his wake; literary men, blessed with good memories, became in great demand, and were liberally paid—as literary pay went those days—to devote their nights to the gallery of Parliament, and their days to writing out as much of what had passed there as they could recollect; but so long as he had to encounter only single reporters, Woodfall out-distanced them all. Some of them might be equal to him in one part of the work, others in another; one man might remember as much; another might express it as elegantly, and a third might reproduce it with as much dispatch; but Woodfall had the union of all three to an extent which none of them could match. In that feature, which was most apparent to the reader, and in which they were most interested, some of his contemporaries were woefully behind him. It was no uncommon thing for some of them to be seven days in arrears with their parliamentary debates. As the memory of each unwritten day's proceedings grew dim with the fresh overlaid stratum of the subsequent debates, it may be imagined that when they did at last appear it was in a rapid and colorless form.

Woodfall, on the contrary, was always methodical and always punctual; the debates were never delayed beyond the following evening, so that members going down to the house might purchase on the way the report of what they said on the evening before. The very perfection to which he had carried his system led to its downfall. He could not be beaten by individual skill; he might be overpowered by number. If he did the work of six men, the obvious resource of a rival was to engage six men to do the work, and this way was not long in being struck out.

AS TO THE RELATIVE VALUE OF DARK AND LIGHT EYES.—The *London Illustrated Times* gives this bit of beauty-knowledge for the ladies:

At the late Wimbledon Volunteer meeting the prize-winners have all been grey or blue-eyed men. If true, this will go far to establish the inferior practical usefulness of dark eyes, just as their comparative moral qualities were depreciated years ago by Dr. Leask, who wrote "Men with grey eyes are generally keen, energetic, and, at first, cold; but you may depend on their sympathy with real sorrow. Search the ranks of our benevolent men and you will agree with me." If light-eyed men are more quick-sighted, as well as more keen, energetic and benevolent, who would not be fair? The theory, so far as shooting is concerned, is verified as far as my own observation goes; for Lord Elcho, Lord Bury, Mr. Jopling and other crack shots have all eyes of the favorite color; and the fact is perhaps worth remembering when a country corps has to decide between two or more competitors of almost equal skill who are willing to represent their brethren in arms at the annual symposium.

VALUABLE RECIPE.—So many inquiries have been made for the recipe for preparing the West India Pickles which took the first premium at the State Fair, that we have obligingly been furnished with a copy for publication:

Have ready a small white cabbage sliced, and the stalk removed, a cauliflower cut into neat branches, leaving out the large stalk, small cucumbers, small carrots, cut in stars or other graceful shapes, button onions, string beans, radish pods, barberries, cherries, green grapes, nasturtiums, small red and green peppers, etc., put them in an earthen dish or crock, sprinkle them with salt and a little alum, pour boiling water over them, let them lie in the brine four days, turning them carefully every day, then take them out and drain them, wash each one separately in vinegar, wipe them carefully in a cloth, and lay them on a sieve near the fire to dry.

For the pickle liquor, to every two quarts of the best vinegar put an ounce and half of white ginger root, scraped and sliced; the same of long peppers, two ounces button onions cut in pieces, one ounce of turmeric, two ounces bruised mustard seed, two ounces pounded horse-radish. Let these ingredients, mixed with the vinegar, infuse in a covered stone jar for a week, sitting in a warm place; put the prepared vegetables into glass or earthen jars, as taste may direct, and strain the pickle over them. The pickle must cover them well, or they will spoil. Put a table spoonful, or more, of sweet oil on the top of each jar full, and secure them with cork and bladder, or seal them. They will keep for years if carefully put up.—[Exchange.

THOMPSON WITHOUT THE P.—In the Fourth New York District an individual of the name of Thompson was drawn from No. 6 State street. Himself and witnesses swore that his name was Thompson, "without the p." After a good deal of discussion as to the merits of the "p," Thompson without the "p" was excused; as it was found that he was drawn twice—once with the "p" and once without the "p."