

washing of the sailors was hanging on the rigging, and there were few signs of action about the ships until the Merrimac was seen steaming toward them. The guns were, however, quickly put in order, and, as the queer monster of iron moved up, the Cumberland opened with her heavy guns, and the Congress came to her aid. The shore batteries joined in, but the balls fell from the iron sides of the Merrimac without penetrating them, and she still came on. She did not fire until she was within easy range, when she gave a broadside at the Congress. She did not stop here, but pointing her iron prow at the Cumberland, she put on full steam and made for it. The ship was struck at right angles, and the hole made was so large that a horse and cart could have been driven through it without touching its sides. It was so skillfully done that the sailors on the Merrimac afterward said that they hardly felt the shock. With this great hole in her side the Cumberland's fate was sealed, and Lieutenant Howard saw her sink beneath the waves. Her men, he says, kept up their firing until the boat went down.

The Merrimac, after striking the Cumberland, backed out and began a new attack upon the Congress. The men at Fortress Monroe could see the smoke of both vessels as they rained shot and shell upon one another. Finally the Congress ran aground, and her officers, seeing that they could do nothing more, ran up the white flag. In her grounded condition the Merrimac could not possibly take her, and, after taking off a few prisoners, they shelled her with hot shot. She was soon a mass of flames, and she was still burning when the Monitor arrived. In the meantime the United States frigates the Roanoke, the St. Lawrence and the Minnesota had sailed from Fortress Monroe to the rescue. The necessity of a good pilot can be seen by what followed. The ships had hardly started before they ran aground, and the Merrimac, having finished up the Cumberland and the Congress, was now ready to steam toward them. It was, however, late Saturday afternoon. The tide had changed, and the pilots of the Merrimac said that she must draw off until morning, or she would also be aground. Their advice was taken, and the ship drew off to the southern side of Hampton Roads, near Sewall's Point, its officers intending to come back and destroy the Minnesota the next day.

When the day broke, however, there was a new figure on the scene. "It looked," says Mr. Howard, "like a massive iron turtle with a gigantic black cheese box on its back, and it swam to and fro in front of the Minnesota, and between it and the Merrimac. As the day grew brighter, through their glasses the confederate officers could get a better idea of this new marine monster. It was apparently a raft plated with iron, with a great round tower rising from its center. As the officers looked they saw this tower move slowly about, and two mighty eleven-inch guns were pointed in the direction of the Merrimac. They had read about this vessel which was being made. They knew it was Ericson's Monitor, and they thought it the strangest looking vessel which up to that time had floated upon the sea. It looked very small beside the mighty Merrimac, and its two guns did not appear invulnerable in comparison with

their ten. 'Its speed,' says Lieutenant Howard, 'was not more than five knots an hour, or just about the same as the Merrimac, but its small size enabled it to move about more quickly, and it was more manageable in every way. It had left New York two days before, and when it was still twenty miles from Fortress Monroe its officers had heard the booming of the guns of the engagement of the Merrimac with the Cumberland and Congress. When I went on board of her the Congress was still blazing, and Captain Worden had just heard of the terrible destruction which the Merrimac had accomplished that day. He was shown how the Merrimac had drawn off, and was told that it would surely come back in the morning to destroy the Minnesota, the Roanoke and the St. Lawrence, and he was anxious to go at once to their defense.'"

"Well, as soon as it was decided that I was to act as pilot I went down into the pilot house and we at once got under way. The pilot house was a little iron box just large enough for four men to stand upright within it. It was situated in the fore part of the vessel some distance in front of the revolving turret, in which the guns were placed. It was half above and half below the iron deck, and it was, in fact, a square iron box, made of iron logs about nine inches thick, which were bolted and dovetailed at the corners. There were little slits between the upper set of logs and the one below, through which we could peep out. The steering wheel was secured to one of the logs, and I had a wire connection with the engines, which were under the deck, so that by the ringing of bells I could give the proper signals to the engineer. The turret, behind us, so revolved that the guns were every now and then pointed directly at the pilot house, and during the action the officers had to be very careful that they did not hit the house. It was Saturday night that we sailed past Fortress Monroe and came to anchor in front of the Minnesota. A darker night I don't think ever came out of the heavens. You could almost feel it, and it was only by the light of the burning Congress that I was able to get my bearings. This made a fair light, and I steered by it. The Minnesota was a fine vessel. She was a frigate, bearing eighty-four guns, and she looked very grand in comparison with the little Monitor as we sailed by her. We moved to a short distance in front of her and then waited for day.

"The sun rose that morning on waters like a millpond. It was a beautiful Sunday, and you could see for miles on each side of you. As the day broke the Yorktown and the Jamestown, two of the confederate ships, came out and started for the Minnesota. We at once got under way and sent a shot at them. They left at once. They didn't want to have anything to do with the 'cheese-box on a raft,' as they called it. In the meantime the Merrimac had roused up and came on toward the Minnesota. The Monitor rested a little in front of the Minnesota and waited for her. The officers were in the turret. Captain Worden stood by my side and gave the orders. The Merrimac first fired at the Minnesota, and then Capt. Worden gave the order for the Monitor to go for the Merrimac and to begin firing. The Merrimac was a mile off when we

started for her. The shots were at once concentrated on the two ironclads. We turned this way and that, firing about every seven minutes. We kept moving about the Merrimac and getting in good shots at almost every fire. The vessels were often not more than thirty feet apart, and the engagement was terrible. The turret of the Monitor was made of heavy plates of iron, so that its walls were about eight inches thick. The shots of the Merrimac pounded great dent in it, but they did not go through. Our guns tore the iron from the Merrimac, and had we understood its construction, we might have sunk her. We should have aimed for her at the water line. Her iron plates did not extend much below this. I have always thought that we did send one shot into her, and I think we would have surely sunk her had we continued to fire in this way."

"When was Captain Worden wounded?"

"It was some hours after the beginning of the engagement, a little after noon," replied Lieutenant Howard. "He was standing at my right, and was bending over and looking out of the slit. We were just going by the Merrimac, and were not more than ten yards from her when a shell struck the log just below the sight hole, and then exploded. It broke this eight-inch log of iron in two. It threw one end of it upward and the log held there in the air by the dove-tail with which it was fastened to the box. The splinters of the shell flew through the slit. With them came powder and flame. These got into Captain Worden's eyes and pinned him. They cut his face, so that it was covered with blood, and his clothes and mine was covered with dust and powder. Captain Worden exclaimed that he was shot. He could not see, but the light that came in made him think that the pilot house was ruined, and he gave orders to move off. He then felt his way down through the floor into the lower part of his vessel, where his cabin was and gave the command over to Lieutenant Greene. That shot came near destroying the pilot house. Had we been a second later in turning, Captain Worden and myself would surely have been killed. As it was we were saved only by that dove-tailed log standing in the air. Had it fallen it would have crushed us both. Had the boat been less slow in moving the shot would have struck the pilot house square, and we were so close that nothing could have saved us. As it was it hit the iron logs at an angle of seventy five degrees, and only broke them. Captain Worden was a terrible sight as he moved off down into his cabin. The blood was rushing from every part of his face. His eyes were closed, and his skin was blackened with the powder. His wounds, however, seemed to have his least thought. He did not faint, and he kept his mind upon the battle. He gave over the direction of the vessel to Lieutenant Greene, and we had to report to him every few minutes as to how the fight was going on."

"Did the officers of the Merrimac know that they had shot Worden at this time?" I asked.

"I think not," replied Lieutenant Howard, "for they moved off so shortly afterward. My first orders from Lieut-