

*Navy warfare of land and ashore*

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# THE NAVY IN CONGRESS:

BEING

## SPEECHES

OF THE

HON. MESSRS. GRIMES, DOOLITTLE, AND NYE;

OF THE SENATE.

AND THE

HON. MESSRS. RICE, PIKE, GRISWOLD, AND BLOW;

OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.



WASHINGTON:  
FRANCK TAYLOR.

1865.



# THE NAVY IN CONGRESS.

## SPEECH OF HON. J. W. GRIMES, OF IOWA.

IN THE SENATE.

Friday, February 17, 1865.

Mr. GRIMES said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: I would, if I could, bring the Senate back to the consideration of the subject immediately before it. I shall attempt to do so in the few remarks I have to submit this evening.

I shall not follow gentlemen in the wandering debate that has characterized this occasion. I shall discuss no party issues. I have no encomiums to pronounce upon and no denunciations to utter against the old Democratic and Whig parties, for I am content that the dead should bury their dead.

I shall say nothing of the alleged corruptions in the Navy Department, for all these charges have been triumphantly refuted by the Senator from Wisconsin, who was a member of the select committee of this body especially instructed to investigate them.

I have nothing to say of the attempted purchase of a part of Seavey's Island for the use of the Portsmouth navy-yard, for it is in the recollection of most of the Senators here that all the remarks that have been submitted to the Senate to-day upon that subject have been annually replied to by the distinguished gentleman now at the head of the Treasury Department, very much to the satisfaction of the Senate. I cannot help, however, remarking in this connection that all the wrong in that case, if there were any wrong, was done by a rear admiral of the Navy, an officer of the very class whom it is sought by the amendment under consideration to make omnipotent on this subject as well as upon every other connected with naval affairs. Nor have I any reply to make in relation to the contemplated purchase of land for additions to the navy-yard at Charlestown, except to state the significant fact that that purchase also was recommended by the officers attached to that yard—the same class of men, be it remembered, who will be made Lords of the Admiralty should the amendment proposed by the Senator from Ohio be adopted.

Mr. President, I suppose this question will be decided—it certainly ought to be—without any regard to personal considerations. We

ought to approach this question without being influenced in the remotest degree by our likes or our dislikes of any individual now connected, or who has hitherto been connected, or is likely to be connected, with the administration of the Navy Department. We are not legislating in regard to any individual. There may be an objectionable man connected with the Navy as Assistant Secretary, or as Secretary, or as head of a bureau. Our remedy in such a case is to get rid of that man, and not by one swoop, upon an appropriation bill, attempt to overturn the entire naval organization.

I do not stand here to night as the defender or as the advocate of any man, but to maintain what I believe to be the public interest in connection with the Navy Department. It is the public service we are to promote, and not the interests of any man or set of men. I shall not seek to defend or palliate any wrong, no matter by whom committed. I believe that this Department, as all other Departments, has made mistakes, but the true remedy for them is not the one set forth by the Senator from Ohio; and entertaining the opinions that I do on the subject, there is no alternative for me but to oppose as strenuously as I may be able the amendment that he proposes.

I have no fault to find with the Senator from Ohio for proposing this amendment. It is true that we have a Naval Committee, of which I happen to be a member. It is true that it is the business of that committee to examine into all the laws in connection with naval affairs, to inform themselves of the operations of the naval organization, to understand not only its written but its unwritten laws, to know what vessels have been built or are being built, the character of their armament, the character of the machinery by which they are to be propelled, their efficiency and speed, and the character of the contracts under which they are to be built. I think I can say that the Committee on Naval Affairs have endeavored, as far as their capacity and time would allow them, to thus inform themselves on all these points. It is the duty also of this committee

to inform themselves, and I think they have attempted to do it, not only in regard to our own particular naval organization, but in regard to the naval organizations of the different nations of the earth, and if in their opinion there be any advantages over ours in any of those organizations to suggest them to the Senate for adoption into our own. I think the Committee of the Senate on Naval Affairs have informed themselves in regard to each of the many descriptions of vessels, some twenty-five or thirty, that have been built by the Navy Department, and that now constitute parts of our Navy.

Nor am I going to find fault with the Senator because, in obedience to an instruction which he received from the Senate, as a member of the committee on the conduct of the war, he examined only one particular type of vessels that had been built by the Department, and found some objections to that class. But I submit to the Senate that it would hardly be wise for them in a time like this, upon a supply bill, because there happened to be in the estimation of the committee on the conduct of the war some objections to that particular kind of vessels, to overturn the entire Navy organization, when the Naval committee, who have examined into ALL the various descriptions of vessels that have been built, and have been able to survey the whole field, and having done it in obedience to the general instructions which they have received from this body, have not deemed it advisable to propose any such change.

Nor am I going to object that this amendment was studiously kept secret—I will not say that; but that it was not communicated to the Senate or to the Naval Committee before it was offered. It is possible that we might have taken a different view of the subject if our attention had been called to it earlier, if we had been permitted to pass upon it and investigate it as an independent measure by itself; but coming to us as it does, and informed as we are in regard to the general operations of the Navy, knowing the success that it is admitted on all hands has been achieved by the Department in the construction of the varied descriptions of vessels; knowing what has been accomplished for the country and for our national reputation by the Navy during the last four years under its present administration, we have unhesitatingly come to the conclusion, as the organ of this body in connection with naval affairs, that this change ought not to be made, and would prove to be most disastrous if made.

The whole argument upon which this amendment is based proceeds upon one assumption, and that is that there have been mistakes made in the construction of what are known as the light-draught iron-clads. Admit it. Is that a reason for overturning the Navy Department? Is this the first mistake that has been made? If the committee on the conduct of the war had inquired of the Naval Committee, we could have told them that a similar mistake was made in regard to the second class of monitors that were built, that same class of monitors

which have been doing such efficient service at Fort Fisher, and of which Admiral Porter speaks in such eulogistic terms. Is it unknown to the committee on the conduct of the war that at least one-half of all the old sailing vessels that have been built since the establishment of the American Navy have been modified and changed? Does not the Senator know as well as I do that within five years the Pensacola was changed under our own eyes at the navy-yard in Washington, and forty feet added to her length? Was that a reason for overturning the Navy Department? Does not the Senator know—if he had informed himself he might have known—that nearly all of the British iron-clad vessels, such as the Warrior and Black Prince, are now pronounced failures? Does any man doubt it? I have the highest British authority for saying it lying upon my desk to be read if desired; and the Warrior is now being dismantled, being considered unfit to go to sea.

Did the Senator ever know that a peer of the realm or any member of the House of Commons rose in his place in the British Parliament and gravely proposed to overturn the whole Admiralty system of that empire upon a supply bill because mistakes had been made in the construction of their iron-clad vessels—vessels that have cost millions of pounds sterling? What would be thought of such a proceeding were it attempted?

Admit the mistake to be as great as it is charged to be. Is this the only mistake that has been made? Has no other Department blundered? Have there been no mistakes in the Treasury, and will you put that Department in commission also? Has the War Department been entirely free from blunders during the last four years, and if not, will you overturn that Department upon an amendment to the Army appropriation bill?

But how great is this alleged mistake, where did it originate, and how is it to be obviated by the Senator's amendment? If I understood the Senator correctly, he entirely exonerated the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary of the Navy from all blame in this matter.

Mr. WADE. Perhaps that statement is a little too broad. I certainly did not accuse them of any intentional wrong, but there were sins of omission perhaps that will be found when we come to report the evidence. The statement of the Senator is a little broader than the one I intended to make.

Mr. GRIMES. I understood the Senator to say so. Perhaps I misunderstood what he said.

Mr. WADE. I did not exactly mean that. Mr. GRIMES. If I remember aright, the charge of malfeasance, or misfeasance, or non-feasance, whatever it was that the Senator brought, was against the chief of the Bureau of Construction principally, or perhaps against a board of which he spoke, and of which the chief of the Bureau of Construction and the chief of the Bureau of Engineering were members.

Mr. WADE. If the Senator will allow me,

I will state that I complained of a general looseness and inattention to the business. It does not seem to have been anybody's business to attend particularly to the construction of these vessels. They were passed from hand to hand, and frequently the person engaged and charged with it, Mr. Stimers, was sent on other duty, and so it would pass into other hands. There was a general inattention; it was nobody's business really to trace the matter through. That is what I charged. That was the principal complaint I made.

Mr. GRIMES. I think I did not misunderstand the Senator when he said that the charge was based principally upon the testimony of Mr. Stimers, which was given two or three days before he made his speech here yesterday and which yet remains untranscribed in the notes of the reporter, and that Mr. Stimers said he had applied to Mr. Lenthall, or Mr. Isherwood, or to a board of which they were members, to compute the displacement of those vessels, and that they refused to do it.

Mr. WADE. They did not do it.

Mr. GRIMES. I was at once satisfied that there was some mistake about that statement of the Senator, I was satisfied that the Senator from Ohio was misinformed, and that his criticisms upon the chief of the Bureau of Construction were unjust. It is a singular fact that the gentlemen who advocated and opposed this amendment in the House of Representatives united in one thing, and I believe only in one thing, and that was in the encomiums pronounced on the chief of the Bureau of Construction; while the advocates of the same measure in the Senate also unite in one thing, and perhaps only in one thing, and that is in their condemnations of the chief of the Bureau of Construction. After I listened to the remarks of the Senator from Ohio I had a conversation with him on the subject, and discovered that I did not misunderstand the statements of his speech in this regard. I then addressed a note to the chief of the Bureau of Construction, satisfied as I was that the Senator was wholly mistaken, first as to Mr. Lenthall having had any connection with the light-draught iron-clads, and second, as to his being opposed to the construction of iron vessels, for I think the Senator made that charge also. I have a letter from the chief of the bureau, written this morning, which I will read. It is as follows:

NAVY DEPARTMENT,  
BUREAU OF CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR,  
February 17, 1865.

SIR: In reply to your inquiry of this date, I have respectfully to say that I was never a member of any board to which the subject of the light-draught monitors was referred. I have no knowledge that any such board was ever called; nor was I ever asked to calculate their displacement, and therefore did not refuse to do so. To this day I have never seen any of the plans or specifications of these vessels or of their machinery, except the general outline of the hulls deposited in this bureau by Chief Engineer Stimers at the time the advertisement to contractors referring them to Chief Engineer Stimers's office at New York, was issued inviting propositions from bidders.

It is not true that I am now or that I ever have been opposed to the building of iron-clad vessels, or so intimated to any one. But, on the contrary, I have strongly advocated vessels of that class. I have views of my own as to the adaptation of certain classes of these vessels for sea-going purposes; but I have never doubted the value or necessity of the monitor type for the purposes of harbor defence, and the unsatisfactory result of the light-draught monitors is altogether due to errors of detail made by Chief Engineer Stimers, and not to the general principle of these vessels.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN LENTHALL, *Chief of Bureau.*  
Hon. JAMES W. GRIMES, *Chairman of Committee on Naval Affairs, United States Senate.*

Mr. Lenthall is one of the most competent and one of the purest men, in my estimation, notwithstanding what has been said by Senators on this floor, that I have ever had the fortune to be acquainted with—a gentleman of whom an eminent officer of the Navy, speaking of his merits, said that if he had lived under any other Government he would long since have been knighted for the services he had rendered his country.

Now, I think, Mr. President, it will be admitted even by the Senator himself, that the whole substructure of his argument is removed. He based his argument entirely upon the testimony of Stimers—Stimers, who made the mistake in the calculation of displacement, and who was therefore directly interested in swearing, as he did swear, according to the Senator's version of his testimony, that the blame rested, not upon himself, but on some one else. He must fix it upon some one, so a mythical board that never had any existence, but which was said to be composed in part of two persons toward whom he does not entertain very friendly feelings, was selected as the scape-goat to bear the burden of his sins.

The Senator will remember that yesterday he was not able to tell me who was the third member of this apocryphal board of officers. He said that Stimers stated that it was composed of Lenthall and Isherwood, and some one else whose name he could not recollect, and who, it seems, is destined to be unknown in history. I cannot secure the testimony of this unknown man, but I have the testimony of Mr. Isherwood on this subject, which I will read:

NAVY DEPARTMENT,  
BUREAU OF STEAM ENGINEERING,  
February 17, 1865.

SIR: In reply to your note of inquiry concerning certain facts in relation to the light-draught monitors, I have to say that I never was a member of any board to consider or pass on that subject; that no such board was ever, to my knowledge, called; nor was my opinion on the subject ever asked of me further than to estimate (after the designs had been adopted) what speed a certain boiler-power would give a certain immersed amidships section assumed at a draught of six feet.

I never saw either the plans or specifications of these vessels, or of their machinery; never gave any directions in regard to them; and did not have in any way the slightest connection with their design or construction.

I have always been strongly in favor of building iron-clad war steamers of the type and proportions which my professional experience could approve.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

B. F. ISHERWOOD.

Hon. J. W. GRIMES, *United States Senator.*

So much for the testimony of Stimers before the committee on the conduct of the war, and the mythical board of construction or computation that has been so thoroughly denounced as old and incapable. Can there be a lingering doubt in the mind of any one as to the weight that should be given to Stimers' testimony in this matter? If such a board ever existed the record of its creation is in the Navy Department. Where is that record? It has no existence.

Now, Mr. President, I repeat the inquiry, how much of a mistake has been made, after all? I think not a great one; I think that the Government has not been greatly injured. If I am not mistaken the Senator stated that these vessels had been raised so as to give them a larger draught than was at first intended, and if I did not misconceive what he stated, he said, in answer to a question of a Senator on the other side of him, that they were raised with wood. Am I right?

Mr. WADE. I said they were continued up twenty-two inches.

Mr. GRIMES. Of wood?

Mr. WADE. Yes; of wood and iron—iron-clad as the rest of it was.

Mr. GRIMES. The Senator is mistaken in regard to that. They are iron, and not wood, as I understood the Senator yesterday.

Mr. WADE. Wood faced with iron.

Mr. GRIMES. The Senator is mistaken. They are wholly of iron. Well, Mr. President, how great are the mistakes that have thus been made? How much is the Government going to be injured? On this subject I beg leave to read a letter addressed to the Senator from Ohio himself by the Secretary of the Navy, and which will doubtless considerably enlighten the Senate on this subject. Every Senator who has engaged in this discussion has asserted his belief that the Secretary of the Navy is a strictly honest man. He would not seek to mislead us or the country. What are his opinions on this subject, founded upon research and information far more thorough and extensive than it was possible for the Senator from Ohio to make? I will read:

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *January 16, 1865.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th ultimo, inclosing a copy of a resolution of the Senate in the following words:—

"*Resolved*, That the Committee on the Conduct of the War be instructed to inquire what progress has been made in the construction of the iron-clad gunboats contracted for in the year 1862—by whom the contract was made on the part of the Government—who planned the models of the same, and who is responsible therefor? Have any of them been finished? If so, what was the condition of the vessel after she was launched? Are the other vessels contracted for

to be built on a plan or model similar to the Chimo lately launched at Boston? and all information which may be had touching said gunboats."

I am requested in the letter transmitting a copy of the resolution to "furnish the committee, as soon as convenient, with such information upon the subject-matter of the resolution as may be in possession of the Navy Department."

I presume that a mistake has been made by the committee or by the Senate in their inquiry relative to the "iron-clad gunboats contracted for in the year 1862." In the spring and summer of 1863 contracts were made for twenty turreted vessels of the Monitor class. Not doubting that the resolution of the Senate and the investigations and inquiries of the committee have reference to those contracts and those vessels, my response will be made as if the resolution read 1863 instead of 1862. The mistake of a year in regard to the execution of these contracts, provided they are, as I suppose, those referred to, is important to the contractors as well as to the Department, and should therefore be corrected.

In answer to that part of the resolution which inquires "by whom the contract was made on the part of the Government," I have to state it was by the Chief of the Bureau of Construction under advertisement issued by this Department, on the 10th of February, 1863. A reference to the message of the President and accompanying documents of the first session of the present Congress may be had for a list of bidders and award of contracts under direction of this Department.

It is asked "who planned the models of the same, and who is responsible therefor?"

The general idea of a light-draught iron-clad inside of a raft of wood was furnished by Captain John Ericsson, of New York, the distinguished inventor, at the request of this Department. The details of the plan and the preparation of the working drawings were intrusted to Chief Engineer A. C. Stimers, who was instructed by the Bureau of Construction to consult with Captain Ericsson and take directions from him.

It will be observed that this relates to all the monitors.

Mr. WADE. The twenty light-draught monitors?

Mr. GRIMES. Yes, all of them.

To that extent Chief Engineer Stimers is responsible.

"Have any of them been finished; if so, what was the condition of the vessel after she was launched?"

None of the light-draught turreted vessels are quite finished. The Casco, converted into a boat for reconnoitering and torpedo purposes, has recently made a passage from Boston to New York. Complaints were made by the officers of discomforts, as complaints were formerly made of the brigs and schooners of the Navy, so many of which, like the Grampus, Somers, Porpoise, and Bainbridge, have gone to sea and never been heard of.

The Secretary might have added the Levant and several others.

The Chimo was the first of her class which was got into the water, and led to the discovery that due allowance had not been made for all the weights. She floated on an even keel only about three inches above the water, instead of fifteen, as was intended and expected. Several of the same class which have been since launched have

varied considerably from this, all of them being high out of the water, notwithstanding all were made from the same drawings, showing that there have been variations in model or in the weight of materials used in construction.

Before any of this class of vessels had been launched, Rear Admiral Dahlgren and Acting Rear Admiral Lee had strenuously urged the Department to send them some monitors—hulls without turrets—to be used for the purpose of reconnoissance and as torpedo boats. Five of the light-draughts most advanced were therefore ordered to be finished without the turrets. When relieved of this weight, the necessity and expense of raising their sides and thereby increasing their capacity was obviated. The other fifteen were recommended to be enlarged by building them higher, thus increasing their capacity about one hundred and thirty tons, and rendering them consequently more efficient. Previously the same plan was adopted in constructing and completing the second batch of monitor vessels, which have just passed through the baptism of fire at Fort Fisher; and have remained at anchor on that coast, exposed as it is in the winter season ninety miles from a harbor, during the most terrific gale of wind ever experienced, according to the Wilmington papers, and performing, as Rear Admiral Porter reports, to the admiration of everybody.

“Are the other vessels contracted for to be built on a plan or model similar to the Chimo, lately launched at Boston?”

I have already stated that twenty light-draught monitors were contracted for in the spring and summer of 1863. All were designed upon the monitor plan which has been so serviceable, but modifications and alterations were made of five, omitting the turrets for special purposes, by special request of naval officers.

The resolution, in conclusion, calls for “all information which may be had touching said gunboats.”

The necessity of light-draught iron-clads to operate in the bays, sounds, and rivers, as well as for defensive purposes, was forced upon the Department at an early period of the present struggle. Not only was the contest in which we were engaged peculiar, but the means and measures to meet and suppress it, particularly those of the navy, were novel and without precedent. Most of the lines of Army communication were by water, and the Navy was expected to protect them and render them secure. A brief experience and a few engagements made it evident that light-draught, unprotected, wooden boats, with magazines, machinery, and boilers exposed, could be driven off by field artillery behind earthworks. Light-draught iron-clads became, therefore, an imperious necessity, and the convictions of the Department, and of all indeed who gave the subject intelligent consideration, were irresistibly in favor of such vessels; but we were without models, and the wants of the country were pressing. Neither of the Maritime Powers of Europe had built, or attempted to build, a light-draught iron-clad.

The Navy Department, in this emergency, was compelled to feel its way, without experience or precedent in any quarter to guide it. Appeals had been made in vain to Congress to provide a proper establishment for the construction of iron and armored vessels, where plans and models might have been developed and matured with studied deliberation and skill. When the contracts for these vessels were entered into, delays

were inadmissible. Difficulties with foreign Powers seemed imminent, and in the absence of any national establishment immediate contracts for the construction of armored vessels were called for on every hand. The authorities of the States and cities on the seaboard were appealing to the Department and the Government for iron-clad vessels to defend their harbors from the two or three rovers that were then already abroad, and great apprehensions were entertained that certain formidable ships in the process of construction in France and England for the rebels would soon visit our coast. Many who may now be forward to criticize and censure the enlarged and energetic action that was taken were at that time profuse in censuring the Department for delays in not more promptly providing whatever vessels were necessary for the service.

Congress having omitted to provide an establishment for the construction of an iron navy, where this class of armored vessels of light draught could be constructed, the Department has been compelled to rely on contractors and outside parties in different sections of the country for the work.

The parties contracting have generally exerted themselves to meet in good faith the requirements of the Government, and it is a subject of just congratulation that, in this great emergency, when the Department was compelled to act without precedents to guide it, and when the Government had omitted to furnish a suitable establishment, private enterprise and our skilled mechanics have so well met the difficulties presented.

Mr. J. B. Eades, of St. Louis, furnished the light-draught river boats which have been so successful on the Mississippi and also in the bay of Mobile. Captain Ericsson, the inventor of the monitor class of vessels, furnished the idea which is now near practical consummation. Although as yet untried these vessels differ so little from the original monitor that there is every reason to anticipate their success. To predict otherwise would be presumption; yet it has been the misfortune of the Department to encounter hostility and forebodings of failure with every improvement which has been made during the war, and often from those of whom encouragement and support might reasonably have been expected. Some of the best engineers and constructors in the service of the Government, as well as others, expressed their want of confidence in the first monitor, and declared it would prove a failure. It was represented that she could not float, that she would plunge to the bottom when launched, and that to send her to Hampton Roads would be recklessness amounting to crime. A constant succession of struggles against prejudices, ignorance, and fixed habits and opinions, has been the fate of the Department at every step which the extraordinary exigencies of this war have compelled it to take. While it is not difficult to criticize and point out mistakes in a new description of vessels which the change in naval warfare has suddenly called into existence, and to suggest alterations and improvements on what has already transpired, it is a satisfaction to the Department which was compelled to encounter this opposition to know that this class of vessels, subjected at the beginning to ridicule, and subsequently to obloquy and denunciation, has been successfully tried in battle and in storm—that these vessels have equalled the expectations of the country in periods of peril, and have been extensively copied abroad. Other Governments are

adopting them, while many of the discontented of our own country still question the wisdom of building vessels of the class which has at a critical moment rendered unequalled service to the Union, and saved the capital of the nation.

In encouraging contrast with the illiberal and prejudiced opinions which have opposed all improvements, denounced them in advance as failures, and been dissatisfied even with successful results, are the observations and reflections of the sagacious and sensible author of the recent valuable work on "English and French neutrality," who, appreciating the difficulties of the Department, remarks at page 458 of his instructive volume:

"It is no small proof of ability in the management of the Navy that there was skill enough to provide, and independence enough to use, a form of war-ship and a kind of cannon before untried, but which time and experience have shown were alone of all ships and weapons then known capable of meeting the emergency."

At the present time the call for light-draught iron-clads comes from every squadron engaged in this struggle. Acting Rear Admiral Lee says that within the limits of his command there must be a large increase of light-draught iron-clads. Vice Admiral Farragut, before he left the scene of his great exploits, asked for additional iron-clads, especially those of light-draught, and declared that the coast could not be held unless he had them. In each of the blockading and river squadrons they are required.

Nearly two years have elapsed since any contracts have been entered into for this class of vessels, and it is hoped the present war is so near its close that no further expenditures for additional ones will be necessary; but should the war continue a year longer more will be wanted.

My acknowledgments are due to the committee for this opportunity to express my views. I shall feel under obligations to them or others, as will the whole country, for any improvements or suggestions which they may propose in consequence of their investigations, or for any undetected errors or mistakes which they may discover, in order that their conclusions and recommendations in this great emergency may be brought to the aid of the Department on this most interesting and important subject.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

GIDEON WELLES,  
Secretary of the Navy.

B. F. WADE,

Chairman of the Committee on the Conduct of the War.

Mr. President, here is the committee on the conduct of the war pursuing an *ex parte* examination, calling before it whom it pleases, and only whom it pleases, reaching the conclusion that these vessels are a failure. The Secretary of the Navy, surrounded by naval officers, seeing daily, if not hourly, the men who are conversant with naval constructions and the performance of naval vessels, having reports at the end of every week from the experts and inspectors who are placed in charge of the construction of these vessels, knowing what the reports are from the officers who are in command of the various squadrons of the performances of similar or nearly similar vessels, comes to the conclusion that they are not failures; but on the contrary that they will

be of great value to the Government. Now, what is the wise course for us to pursue? Would it be wise for us, upon a supply bill, an appropriation bill, on the mere suggestion of the Senator from Ohio, predicated upon testimony that is not before us, which we have not an opportunity to read, or to analyze, or to examine at all, to undertake to condemn these vessels as though we were naval experts, revolutionize the entire Navy Department, and put it into commission? Could a more absurd proposition be submitted to us? After hearing this letter from the Secretary, is any one satisfied that we have squandered \$10,000,000 upon these iron-clads?

In regard to these light draught iron-clads, the facts are very simple. We had a board that sat originally in 1861 to determine the character of the vessels that should be built with the million and a half of dollars appropriated at the extra session in July of that year for the construction of iron-clad vessels-of-war. That board was composed of three superior officers in the Navy. They reported in favor of three different classes of vessels. They reported in favor of the Ironsides, which is an excellent vessel; in favor of the Galena, which has turned out to be a failure; and they said to Mr. Ericsson, who proposed to build the original Monitor, that he might build that vessel for a given sum of money, a small price, and run his own risk upon her; if she turned out to be a success the Government would take her, and if otherwise it would not. That Monitor, at the time she fought the Merrimac, and relieved us of the great weight that rested upon every man here in Washington after the destruction of the Congress and Cumberland, was not the property of the United States, but belonged to John Ericsson and the men who were associated with him in building her.

Whenever the Government has any of these works going on at private yards it directs an engineer to supervise the work, and to see that the contractors put the proper material and the proper kind of workmanship in the vessel. The engineer in the navy, who was engaged in that business in New York, at the beginning of the work on the first monitor, was Mr. A. C. Stimers, the gentleman who was the witness before the committee on the conduct of the war. He is quite a skilful man. I believe he has the reputation of being an excellent engineer. He was associated with Mr. Ericsson, and Mr. Ericsson furnished to him the computations, or they made them together, as to the floating capacity, or the buoyancy, or the displacement, or whatever may be the technical term of the different vessels of the monitor type that were built. When the contract was made for building these light-draught iron-clads, the department directed that they should be built under the supervision, with the advice, and under the direction of Ericsson and Stimers, as all the preceding ones had been built. But it seems that some misunderstanding grew up between Ericsson and Stimers, and Mr. Stimers, without letting the department know anything

about it, undertook to make the computations himself, unaided by and without consulting Ericsson. He never sent the plans or specifications of these vessels to the Navy Department, as is testified before you here this evening by both John Lenthall and Benjamin F. Isherwood. There was where the trouble arose. There was a mistake made in the computation of the displacement of the vessels. There is no question about that. That mistake was not detected until the first vessel was launched, and would not have occurred had Mr. Stimers consulted with Mr. Ericsson as he had been instructed to do, and as he had done from the time the first monitor was contracted for.

Now, Mr. President, let us see what it is proposed by the Senator from Ohio that we should do. This amendment provides:—

*And be it further enacted,* That the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint a Board of Admiralty, which shall consist of the vice admiral, one rear admiral, one commodore, one captain, one commander, and one lieutenant commander, over which the Secretary of the Navy or the officer of highest rank present shall preside; and when the subject under consideration shall appertain to the duties of any bureau in the Navy Department, the chief of such bureau shall be a member of the board, and entitled to sit and vote on the subject.

I should be pleased if the Senator would inform me what will be the tenure of office of this Board of Admiralty.

Mr. WADE. I suppose they will hold their offices at the will of the President, as others do. I suppose the President will have power to turn them out of office, and displace them if he sees fit, as there is no time limited.

Mr. GRIMES. Five naval officers, officers of the line, sea officers, are provided for who are to hold their offices during the will and pleasure of the President, according to the construction the Senator from Ohio gives here, and the Secretary of the Navy is to preside over them. It is to be a kind of New England town meeting. If any question comes before this Admiralty Board in connection with any one of the bureaux, the head of that bureau is then to be permitted to come in, and participate in the discussions.

Has the Senator forgotten, or has he not been informed that within the last few years a great revolution has come over all the navies of the world? Does he not know that the most important officer on board of every ship-of-war, next to the man actually in command, is the engineer? Is he going to intrust the whole navy of the United States to the hands of five line officers, without any consultation, or advice, or uniting with them, and giving any voice to the staff officers of the navy?

Mr. WADE. It is provided that they may take the advice of any one skilled.

Mr. GRIMES. Can they not do that now?

Mr. WADE. They do not.

Mr. GRIMES. I assert that they do. I assert that there has not been any important measure taken by the Navy Department in the last four years without calling to its aid a

board of officers, and the advantage of the present system over that proposed is obvious.

There are some particular officers who are experts in ordnance. The Secretary of the Navy can convene a board of experts of five or seven or nine men who are distinguished in that particular department; they would be able to report something that would be valuable to the Secretary of the Navy and advantageous to the country. But every question in regard to ordnance is to be submitted, under this proposition of the Senator from Ohio, to a board of sea officers, who may or may not know anything about ordnance. We have had time and time again, boards of engineers assembled, to which various questions have been referred by the Secretary of the Navy. They have been composed of experts in that particular department. The advice that they have been in the habit of giving to the Secretary of the Navy has been of value, and will continue to be of value to the Government; but of what value, I pray to be informed, would be the opinion of these five sea officers in regard to the construction of engines? They know no more about engines than the Senator from Ohio or I know about them, and I apprehend that we are about equally ignorant on that subject. So, also, in relation to various special branches of the service. The amendment further is:—

Sec. —. *And be it further enacted,* That the board shall deliberate in common and advise the Secretary on any matters relating to naval organization, naval legislation, the construction, equipment, and armament of vessels, navy-yards, and other naval establishments, and the direction, employment, and disposition of the naval forces in time of war, when required by him. All such opinions shall be recorded.

Sec. —. *And be it further enacted,* That no vessel-of-war shall be built or materially altered, nor any guns of new construction ordered or adopted, nor any engine for any vessel-of-war adopted or ordered, nor any permanent structure for naval service executed, until the plans, estimates, proposals, and contracts for the same shall have been submitted to the board, and its opinion and advice thereon communicated in writing to the Secretary; nor shall any patented invention be bought or adopted for the naval service without first the opinion of the board thereon having been taken; and all experiments to test inventions and naval plans and structures shall be conducted under the inspection of the board, or members thereof named by the Secretary, and submitted to the board for its opinion thereon; and all courts-martial ordered by the Secretary of the Navy shall be detailed by the board.

Sec. —. *And be it further enacted,* That all invitations for plans or proposals for any of the works above mentioned shall be prepared by the board, subject to the approval of the Secretary; and all bids or offers or proposals for the same shall be opened in the presence of the board, and the award made by it, subject to the approval of the Secretary.

Sec. —. *And be it further enacted,* That the Secretary may add to the board from time to time other officers of the Navy eligible to the position of chief of the bureau, not exceeding three at any time, for consultation on any of the

above subjects. The board may take the opinion of eminent practical engineers, mechanics, machinists, and architects, in their respective branches of art or industry, when in their opinion the public service will be promoted by it, and pay them such reasonable compensation as the Secretary may approve.

Mark the second section of the proposed amendment. As I construe it, it virtually takes the control of the Navy from the Secretary and gives it to this board. Not the most trivial thing can be done by him independently of the board, and he is expressly denied the power to even detail a court-martial.

This board may take the advice of engineers and naval architects, but there is nothing requiring them to do it. The Senator does not put a naval architect, or constructor, or engineer, upon the board, and—and that is a very important item—he puts upon it no one to represent the supply department of the Navy, but he leaves the whole charge and control of the Navy, in fact, to this board of line officers, saying that they may if they choose ask the advice, not receive the counsel of, not to allow to participate in their deliberations, these officers of staff branches of the service.

The amendment means neither more nor less than this, if it means anything; to put the naval Department into commission, to put it into leading strings, to put it in the control of some line officers who have been for a long time in the service; or else it means to furnish to the Naval Department a subterfuge by which it can at all times avoid responsibility. Either it means to give the control of the Navy Department to these commissioners, or else the effect will be to furnish the Secretary of the Navy the means in the future of avoiding all responsibility for his acts by trusting everything off upon this board of commissioners. Do you wish to divide responsibility thus? Do you wish to give the Secretary of the Navy an opportunity to shuffle off all responsibility for his acts upon this board of irresponsible officers, who hold their commissions by a life tenure? I surely do not.

Yet, Mr. President, that will be the effect of this amendment if adopted. That is the effect of the British Admiralty administration to day. There is nothing that the members of the naval profession in England are so anxious to get rid of as their admiralty system, after which this amendment is modelled. They saw fit two hundred years ago to put their office of lord high admiral into commission, and it is now wielded by just about such a board as the Senator has proposed to create here, and what is the result of it? Precisely the result that I predict will follow here. A British writer on the admiralty administration says:

"It is unnecessary to insist at any length on the evil of divided councils, which must often occur among six persons brought together by the chapter of accidents, without previous knowledge of each other's views, and in fact the admiralty often represents nothing so completely as the endless diversity of opinions which prevail among naval officers; a diversity which on the other hand is partly accounted for by the absence of

any standard course of policy to be discovered in the conduct of successive naval administrations."

And he says, further:

"With respect to naval officers the case is not more encouraging, for the only one subject on which there is general agreement among them is the utter hopelessness of any good result arising from a system which is felt to hang like a blight over the navy."

That is a navy board which the Senator from Ohio would induce the American Senate to adopt and incorporate into our system. Sir Charles Napier, a great naval authority, says:

"Believing, as I do, that no permanent good can be done for the service until the Board of Admiralty is abolished, I shall point out what appears to me would be the best mode of ruling the navy, although that step has not been taken."

Sir George Cockburn has said:

"Having filled the station of confidential or principal sea lord of the admiralty for more than seventeen years, I feel that my opinion regarding the constitution of the board may sooner or later be deemed worthy of consideration and attention. I am induced, therefore, to place in writing the decisions to which my experience has brought me on this point.

"I have no hesitation in stating that I consider the present establishment of that board to be the most unsatisfactory and least efficient for its purpose that could have been devised."

Mr. President, if you adopt this scheme for a Board of Admiralty, one or two things will follow, either the appointments that will be made under it will be made by the President of the United States upon the suggestion of the Secretary of the Navy, and therefore you will have no more nor less than the tools, the pets, or the friends of the Secretary of the Navy to compose it; or the appointments will be made independently of him—and will be antagonistic to him, and thus you will secure divided councils. Which of the horns of that dilemma will the Senate prefer? Suppose that a new Secretary of the Navy should come into office on the 4th of March, will not the President detail or appoint for his associates in this board men whom he will designate, with whom he is familiar, and with whom he is willing to co-operate? Or, if the present Secretary shall be continued, do you suppose the President will select men whom Mr. Welles will not desire to unite in his councils? If they are not thus appointed, if the President does not regard the wishes of the Secretary, as I suppose he will, he will select men who are in opposition and in hostility to him, and in that case how will the Navy Department be conducted? You will have such confusion as no executive office in this Government was ever yet cursed with.

Mr. President, I trust that it is hardly necessary for me to say anything more than this evening in opposition to the adoption of this amendment. I believe that a more disastrous measure for the Navy could not be devised. I know that there are some officers who are in favor of it. I am tolerably familiar with the sentiment of the Navy, and while some of the

older officers who have spoken with me, and others who have not spoken with me, with whom I am acquainted, are in favor of it, I know that the bone and sinew, the heart and the muscle of the Navy, the men who do the labor and who are destined to do it, the men in mature life, and from that down to the young passed midshipmen, are utterly and wholly hostile to it.

Sir, what has been our experience on this subject? We had this Navy board once, or something tantamount to it. As a friend said to me yesterday, when the proposition was introduced here, "When we got rid of the old board in 1842 we felt as Sinbad the sailor felt when the Old Man of the Sea was lifted off his shoulders." It was an incubus on the Navy, and was so regarded at that time by everybody except some of the old post captains who were assigned as members of the board. It was an inefficient organization, and was so considered by every one whose opinion was worth anything. Every nation on the face of the earth that has had it or anything like it is attempting to abolish it. The Senator from Ohio proposes that we now in a time of war, when of all other times there should not be any division in council, shall adopt it, and make it part of our system, without any consideration, and without any report by a committee of this body in favor of it, and adopt it, too, upon an appropriation bill.

Mr. President, I have been asked two or three times in private conversation, by members of this body and of the other House, why it is that we have not built any other iron vessel of the description of the Ironsides, why we have not built larger vessels corresponding with the large vessels that have been built by France and England.

Mr. WADE. They are failures; that is the reason.

Mr. GRIMES. That is one reason, and it is also because the Senate and House of Representatives very wisely refused to do it. The Navy Department, it will be remembered by the members of this body, made estimates for large iron-clad ships, in obedience to the expressed wishes of the commercial cities on the Atlantic coast, and sent those estimates here. We refused to vote them. For one, I refused my vote because I relied upon that system which is now proved to be the best naval system in the world, with the best ships for the purpose that the American nation desires to accomplish. Everybody admits that the monitors are an admirable sea defence; that for the purpose for which they were originally designed, the protection of our harbors, nothing exceeds them; the Senator from Ohio says, "Provided you can get them from one harbor to another" Have any gone down except the earliest built and most incomplete, the Monitor and Weehawken? Have they not been taken from our north Atlantic cities around Cape Hatteras to the Gulf of Mexico?

The troubles about the monitors has arisen from the fact that their friends have claimed too much for them while their enemies have

too greatly undervalued them. The truth, as is generally the case, lies in the mean between the two parties. I am not much of a believer in them as sea-going vessels; I would not recommend them as cruisers; but for harbor defence, the purpose for which they were originally devised, they are unapproached by anything yet invented by the ingenuity of man.

Mr. CONNESS. Will the Senator permit me for an instant to make a suggestion on that point?

Mr. GRIMES. Certainly.

Mr. CONNESS. I wish simply to state that there are demands for an increase of the Navy on the Pacific coast, and there is great propriety in making that increase; and in some of my most recent conferences with the Navy Department they have announced it as their intention to send some of the monitors around through the Straits of Magellan to that coast, and said at the same time that they were willing to take passage in them.

Mr. GRIMES. In answer to the suggestion which has just been made it will not be inappropriate for me to read a short extract from a report of Admiral Porter in regard to vessels of the monitor class of which the Monadnock is the type. Here let me say what may, perhaps, be known to every Senator, but I will state it nevertheless, that the Monadnock is the only one of these vessels that has been built by the United States Government at a navy yard. All others have been built by contractors; and many of the difficulties that have been experienced in regard to these vessels have originated from the fact stated by Mr. Welles in his letter to the Senator from Ohio, that the vessels were not made at our navy yards, under our own superintendence, and have suffered from overweight and underweight and defective materials. Where the vessels have been made at our own navy yards, under our own superintendence, by our own workmen, no such difficulties have ever been experienced. Admiral Porter says:

"As to the Monadnock, she could ride out a gale at anchor in the Atlantic Ocean. She is certainly a most perfect success, so far as the hull and machinery are concerned, and is only defective in some minor details, which in the building of these vessels require the superintendence of a thorough seaman and a practical and ingenious man.

"The Monadnock is capable of crossing the ocean alone (when her compasses are once adjusted properly), and could destroy any vessel in the French or British navy, lay their towns under contribution, and return again (provided she could pick up coal) without fear of being followed. She could certainly clear any harbor on our coast of blockaders, in case we were at war with a foreign power. As strong and thick as the sides of this vessel are, one heavy shot from Fort Fisher indented the iron on her side armor, without, however, doing any material damage. These vessels have laid five days under a fire from Fort Fisher, anchored less than eight hundred yards off, and though fired at a great deal, they were seldom hit, and received no injury, except to boats and light matter about decks, which were pretty well cut to pieces."

I suppose that is sufficient testimony as to the ability of vessels of that description passing from port to port along our coast.

I was saying, Mr. President, that I think we have the best Navy in the world for our purposes. What are our purposes? First, to protect our own harbors; and if there are any vessels superior to the monitors for that purpose I confess I do not know what they are. Such is not only the judgment of naval men in this country, but of the commercial marine, and of foreign Powers, many of which are at this moment engaged in constructing them. Some have already been built, and many more are being built by the Powers of continental Europe; and some very similar known as the Captain Cowper Coles's pattern are being built by Great Britain. Then we have the fastest

sea-going naval vessels in the world. I know that that has been denied, but I have here the testimony to prove it if it be doubted; testimony that cannot be controverted.

All we want is the monitors to protect our harbors, and then fast vessels to destroy the commerce of a hostile power. It is utter folly for us to undertake to build a navy with which we can compete with France and England in immense naval battles. That is not our policy. Our true policy is to protect ourselves at home, and then to sweep the commerce of our enemy from the sea; and the system that has been pursued by the Navy Department during the last four years in building up the Navy we now have is calculated to accomplish that purpose in a higher degree than any other plan that could possibly be devised.

## SPEECH OF HON. JAS. R. DOOLITTLE, OF WISCONSIN.

IN THE SENATE.

*Friday, February 17, 1865.*

Mr. DOOLITTLE said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: I had intended to make some remarks in reply to the honorable Senator from New Hampshire, confining myself entirely to those matters of investigation which were entered upon by the committee of the Senate of which he was chairman and I was a member; but the speech of the Senator from Delaware for a moment challenges my attention, and a few facts briefly and very concisely stated will show that the whole speech of that gentleman is founded upon nothing; it is mere declamation, sound, without any foundation in truth.

Now, I say to my honorable friend from Delaware, for personally these are our relations, that the Democratic party by name is a party of very modern origin. I remember long before it was born; I was present at its christening. I propose in a moment to strip off this veil which covers what are claimed sometimes to be the glorious antecedents of the great Democratic party. What is the fact, Mr. President? In 1798 the Republican party was originated, and Jefferson and Madison and Monroe and the great statesmen of that period were its founders. In 1800 the Republican party elected Jefferson President for four years. In 1804 the Republican party elected Jefferson again for four years more. In 1808 it was the Republican party which elected Mr. Madison as President of the United States. In 1812 the Republican party elected Madison a second time President of the United States. In 1816 the Republican party elected Monroe as President, and again in 1820 elected him without any opposition whatever. The party opposed to the Republican party during all that period

from 1800 to 1820 was the Federal party, and in 1820 the Federal party as such yielded up its existence, and in 1824 there were four candidates for the Presidency, every one of them running as Republicans, not as Democrats. Mr. Crawford was the nominee of the regular caucus in 1824; General Jackson ran as an independent Republican candidate from Tennessee; Mr. Clay as an independent Republican candidate from Kentucky; and Mr. Adams as an independent Republican candidate from New England, for he at that time had given in his adhesion to the Republican party. In 1824 there was no choice for President by the people; it went to the House of Representatives, and Mr. Adams was chosen as President. In 1828, General Jackson, nominated by the people, not as a Democratic candidate but as the people's candidate and as a Republican, was elected President of the United States; and in 1832, for the first time in the history of the country, was the assumption given to the Republican party, or that branch of it which supported General Jackson, of the Democratic Republican party. It was a contrivance of Mr. Van Buren to secure, not the nomination of General Jackson, but his own nomination as Vice President under him. It was when the first national convention that was ever held in the United States, called also at the instigation of Mr. Van Buren and his friends, and then for the first time that branch of the Republican party which supported General Jackson assumed the name of Democratic Republicans. In 1836 it assumed the same; in 1840 the same; and from that period gradually it began to drop the name of "Republican" and it was called the Democratic party. But, sir, as the

Whig party in 1850, by the issues of that day, was dissolved and buried in the tomb of Webster and Clay, its great champions and representatives, so the Democratic party, when it drew that fatal knife which severed the silver cord and broke the golden bowl of peace, when it drew that fatal knife which destroyed the Missouri compromise, dissolved also and went into fragments, and upon the ruins of all those parties sprang into existence with the newness of life the Republican party based upon the ideas of the old Republican party of Jefferson and Madison, and to those ideas it stands pledged and has from the beginning; and I tell my friend from Delaware that the true, real Republican party, based upon truth as its foundation, in the nature of things never dies, and it never will. And, sir, if we who represent that party this day in the administration of affairs are but true to the principles upon which it reorganized itself in 1854, and again in 1856, and triumphed in 1860, it is to hold the control of the destinies of this country for a generation to come: but if it is false to those principles, we shall pass away, the false representatives of the true, genuine Republican party, ay, sir, the real Democratic party of this country, as it is this day its true representatives and champions.

But, Mr. President, I have been drawn too far in what I have now said by the remarks of the Senator from Delaware. I proposed to say a few words, and but a few, by way of reply to some portion of the remarks of the honorable Senator from New Hampshire, and I shall confine myself in these remarks to the investigation which was ordered by the Senate by a committee, and upon which I was placed as a member, and of which he was chairman. In the first place, let me say, that committee agreed in a report in this: they recommended to Congress the passage of a law which would authorize the Department, whenever bids were put in for a price more than ten per cent., in the judgment of the Department, above the market price, to refuse to accept those bids. Under the law as it originally stood, the Department was bound to accept the lowest bids, whatever might be the price. In 1863, the law was amended so as to provide that the Department should not be bound to accept fictitious or nominal bids. If articles were bid for at a mere nominal price the bids might be disregarded. It might be that iron might be offered at one dollar per ton when it was known to be worth twenty or thirty dollars in the market, and the Department was authorized to reject such a bid as fictitious and nominal. But under this word "fictitious," it was found at the Department to be impossible to determine whether certain bids should or should not be rejected. You could not claim that a bid put in for a specific article, when the price named by the bidder was fifty per cent. above its market value, was a fictitious bid. You could not say that was a nominal bid. The truth is that the change in our currency, the great expansion of our currency, by which the nominal prices of everything have changed so

rapidly, and have within two or three years doubled and more than doubled in some instances, has had the effect of demonstrating that those bidders who sometimes put in their bids for fifty per cent. or even one hundred per cent. above the market price were wise men, prudent men; and they are not to be condemned because they made their bids at these high prices, as the result has shown.

But all the committee concurred in recommending that Congress should pass a law authorizing the Department to reject any article out of the lists of bids when it should appear satisfactorily to the Department that the amount at which it was bid for was more than ten per cent. above its market value, believing that if the Department were clothed with that power they could prevent themselves from being imposed upon, as they had hitherto been imposed upon under the laws as they existed.

But, Mr. President, in relation to the facts which were disclosed before the committee, there was a difference of opinion between the different members of the committee. For myself I maintain that upon that evidence there is no proof which goes to show the fact that any person employed in that Department has been guilty of any offence whatever, or of any violation of his official integrity. I do not say that contracts may not have been imposed upon the Department from the fact that the bids that were put in were sometimes for great prices, enormous prices, some of them twice the market value. But, sir, what I stand here to say—and I feel it my duty to say it to the Senate and to the people of the country—is, that there was no evidence disclosed on that investigation which shows any want of official integrity in any person employed in the Navy Department; for it was to that subject that we particularly gave our attention; and I will refer to the persons by name whose bureaus were examined.

As to the chief of the Department, the Secretary himself, I believe it is not pretended, and never has been by any person, that there were any facts disclosed in that investigation going to throw the slightest shadow of suspicion upon his official integrity in any way whatever. And as to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Fox, between whom and the Senator from New Hampshire, it would appear from the speech certainly of the Senator, no very friendly relations exist, there is no proof in the testimony taken before that committee which in any way whatever reflects upon the character of Mr. Fox for personal integrity. I will ask the honorable Senator from New Hampshire, if in his recollection there is any word of testimony disclosed on that investigation that bears upon his official or personal integrity as a man. So, Mr. President, in relation to Faxon, who is the chief clerk in that Department. Witnesses were questioned to ascertain whether Mr. Faxon had ever in any way received any consideration or in any manner whatever performed his duties as chief clerk of the Department improperly, and I

undertake to say, and the Senator from New Hampshire will not controvert me when I say it, there is no evidence before the committee, as will be seen on referring to the report, that goes to show anything bearing on the integrity of Mr. Faxon. So in relation to Admiral Smith, the chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks; I undertake to say there is nothing in this report detailed upon which the Senator from New Hampshire or anybody else can put down his finger and say, "I charge upon Admiral Smith a violation of his official duties," or "I charge upon him a want of official integrity in the performance of these duties." So too in relation to Mr. Isherwood. If you look through the whole of this testimony you will see that there is nothing which in the slightest degree goes to affect the official integrity of Mr. Isherwood until you come to that testimony which the honorable Senator from New Hampshire read, and to which I wish to call the attention of the Senate for a moment, and which when it is seen in its true light, so far from casting any suspicion on the integrity of Mr. Isherwood, shows on the other hand that Mr. Isherwood was a faithful and diligent and efficient officer in the discharge of his duties in that very respect. We had gone on for months taking testimony, listening to the witnesses as they were questioned, nothing appearing whatever to cast the slightest shade, until just at the close of the examination Mr. Murdock was called and this question was put to him by the Senator from New Hampshire, the chairman of the committee:

"State any facts in your knowledge which tend to prove that bidders at the several bureaux of the Navy Department may have had any knowledge of any bids before theirs were put in."

Murdock made this answer:

"At the opening of the bids in the Bureau of Steam Engineering, early in the spring of 1863—I cannot give the exact date—there were bids received and accepted on the day after the bids generally had been opened and entered on the schedules, and by parties who were present at the day of the opening, the day previous. Among them I remember bids from Mr. Stover for classes at the Washington yard, in connection with others which I cannot now call to mind. I remember, too, that he had no bids for that yard entered on the schedule on the day of the opening, and that all the bids which were deposited and accepted on the morning after were successful. I remember, too, that Mr. Neally, who had charge of the bids, threw out one or two classes on account of the prices being exorbitant. He took the responsibility to throw them out himself, for the reason that there were no other bidders for the class but Mr. Stover.

"At the two openings when I was present, but more especially the opening of June of last year, there were a large number of persons present, and every one in the room had the liberty to take the bids after they had been opened, and read and examine them, and even to take them out of the room into an adjoining room; and I remember distinctly that Mr. Ellis, who had a bid in for two or three classes, came to me and protested against the thing being allowed, for the reason that there was a party whom he did not know in the room,

who had all his bids, and was sitting at Mr. Isherwood's table with a pen in his hand, copying and examining the bids. And there were times when every person in the room had bids of their own or others in their hands, which they read and examined at their leisure."

That statement of Mr. Murdock, on its face, would seem to show that Isherwood, the day after his bids had been received and opened, was receiving bids from some other person, and, as a matter of course, if it were true it would show that Isherwood ought to be punished with the severest penalties of the law; but now what are the facts? I desire specially to call your attention, Mr. President and Senators, to the facts. When the advertisements were issued for those bids they were all issued by Mr. Lenthall, because at the time when they were issued the bureau of which he was the head, the Bureau of Construction, Equipment, and Repair, had not been divided, the Bureau of Engineering had not been taken from it, that being then a branch of Mr. Lenthall's bureau; but by the time the bids came in the business was so great that the bureau had been subdivided, and Isherwood was put in charge of one branch, that of steam engineering, Mr. Lenthall retaining the other branches; and when the bids came in many of them came to Lenthall's bureau, which were for classes belonging to the bureau of which Mr. Isherwood was the head. Immediately upon recalling to the stand Mr. Isherwood, and Mr. Farwell, who was the chief clerk in Lenthall's bureau, the facts appeared. Mr. Farwell swears positively that the very bid to which Murdock referred was deposited on the first day in the bureau of Mr. Lenthall, and it was in the hands of Mr. Lenthall, and Mr. Farwell himself took that bid to Mr. Isherwood's bureau and presented it first to Mr. Neally, who was Mr. Isherwood's chief clerk. Neally at first refused to receive it, because it came too late. Farwell then presented it to Mr. Isherwood, the chief of the bureau, telling him what the facts were. Murdock was present when this witness testified to these facts, and when Mr. Isherwood also testified to them, and on having his attention again called to the subject he states that the facts were precisely as Farwell and Isherwood had stated them. Let me give the words of the witnesses. The reply of Mr. Murdock to the question of the Senator from New Hampshire was on the 1st of June. On the next day he was examined by me, and I will read his testimony:

"*Question.* Was not the bureau then under Mr. Lenthall called the Bureau of Construction, Equipment, and Repair? Was it not all one bureau at the time of the advertising?"

"*Answer.* I do not know whether it was or not. I only know that Mr. Lenthall issued the advertisement for the Bureau of Steam Engineering.

"*Question.* When the bids were put in, do you know whether some of them which were intended for the Bureau of Steam Engineering were delivered in fact to Mr. Lenthall?"

"*Answer.* I know there were some bids in Mr. Lenthall's bureau that belonged to the Bureau of Steam Engineering.

"*Question.* They had all been under one bureau previous to that time, and the advertising was issued by Mr. Lenthall's bureau?"

"*Answer.* Yes, sir.

"*Question.* Was that the spring opening of 1863 of which you speak, the first opening made by the Bureau of Steam Engineering, of which Mr. Isherwood was chief?"

"*Answer.* Yes, sir.

"*Question.* Now, to come more particularly to the transaction of which you spoke in relation to the bid put in by Mr. Brown in behalf of Stover; on having your attention more particularly called to it, do you remember the mistake which Brown asserted was the reason why the bid had not been handed in to Mr. Isherwood?"

"*Answer.* I remember, since having my attention called to the fact last evening, that the claim which he made was that the bid was deposited originally in Mr. Lenthall's bureau.

"*Question.* Did he claim that the bid had been delivered in time, delivered the day before?"

"*Answer.* He claimed that the bid had been delivered to Mr. Lenthall's bureau, and was found among his bids at the opening, whereas it ought to have been delivered to Mr. Isherwood."

Now, let me read Mr. Isherwood's testimony:

"B. F. Isherwood recalled and examined.

"By Mr. DOOLITTLE:

"*Question.* Do you remember the occasion of a bid being brought into your office the next morning after you commenced your opening, which was alleged to have been filed with Mr. Lenthall; a bid for Mr. Stover?"

"*Answer.* I have a very indistinct recollection of Mr. Farwell bringing some bid to me. Whether it was Mr. Stover's bid, or whose it was, I cannot now say. It has passed from my mind. I have been endeavoring to recollect the name, but I cannot. I know that he brought some bid that had been sent to their bureau with other bids, and upon opening it, they finding that it belonged to my bureau, he brought it in to me. That was in my own office.

\* \* \* \* \*

"*Question.* Where they had already been sent in in time, on the day fixed in the advertisement, did you ever give directions to have any bid received and sealed that was brought into the Department after the day fixed?"

"*Answer.* Never. I never received any that was offered after the opening commenced, not even on the same day. When the opening once commences, when the first seal is broken, all further bids are excluded.

"*Question.* And any bid that may have been brought into your office after the opening commenced was a bid which had been filed by mistake in some other bureau of the Department, but filed in time?"

"*Answer.* These bids that we are now referring to in these two bureaus were opened on the same day. The bids for my bureau were comparatively few, quite insignificant compared with the others. We got through ours the first day. The other bureau took two days to open theirs, and, of course, until they did open them they could not tell to whom they belonged, nor to which branch of the bureau they ought to go.

"*Question.* The old bureau, under the charge of Mr. Lenthall, was a Bureau of Construction, Steam Engineering, and Repairs?"

"*Answer.* All the functions that now belong to the three distinct Bureaux of Construction, Equipment, and Steam Engineering then belonged

to the Bureau of Construction alone, which was under Mr. Lenthall.

"*Question.* Your bureau, which is the Bureau of Steam Engineering, branched off from his bureau just about this time?"

"*Answer.* It was a sub-office of his bureau previously, and had then just been erected into an independent bureau. This was the first bidding after the separation.

"*Question.* Who issued the advertisements for this bidding for both these branches of the old bureau?"

"*Answer.* Mr. Lenthall issued the advertisements for that bidding. All since have been issued by me.

"*Question.* Were the advertisements in this bidding issued just as they had previously been, as if it was but one bureau?"

"*Answer.* Yes, sir."

I will next read Mr. Farwell's testimony in relation to that transaction:

"A. B. Farwell recalled and examined.

"By Mr. DOOLITTLE:

"*Question.* You were chief clerk of the bureau of which Mr. Lenthall was the head at the time of the advertisement spoken of, as I understand?"

"*Answer.* Yes, sir, I was.

"*Question.* You may state whether all the advertisements for that bidding of the early spring of 1863 were issued by your bureau, of which Mr. Lenthall was chief.

"*Answer.* They were all issued from our bureau.

"*Question.* Do you remember the circumstance of a certain bid that was put in by one Ainsworth Brown, in behalf of Stover, in the spring of 1863?"

"*Answer.* I remember that Mr. Ainsworth Brown brought all of Stover's bids there at that opening.

"*Question.* On what day did he bring the bids there?"

"*Answer.* He brought them there on the morning of the 13th of March, 1863, the morning on which the opening commenced.

"*Question.* Before any opening had taken place?"

"*Answer.* Yes, sir.

"*Question.* With whom were they filed?"

"*Answer.* With Mr. Lenthall.

"*Question.* Brown acted as agent for Stover?"

"*Answer.* He said he was Mr. Stover's chief clerk.

"*Question.* I believe you have already stated that the openings by Mr. Lenthall were made in your presence?"

"*Answer.* Yes, sir.

"*Question.* Do you remember the opening of Stover's bids in your bureau?"

"*Answer.* I do not remember the opening of Stover's bids any more distinctly than I do the opening of others. I remember that his were opened.

"*Question.* On the opening of those bids will you state whether you found that he had put in bids for matters which belonged to Mr. Isherwood's bureau, and for what yard?"

"*Answer.* Yes, sir; but I do not remember the yard. I only remember that in Mr. Stover's bids we found proposals belonging to Mr. Isherwood's bureau.

"*Question.* Can you state what was done with those bids that belonged to Mr. Isherwood's bureau?"

"*Answer.* That bid of Mr. Stover was opened on the second day of our openings.

"Question. You are sure it was filed on the first day?"

"Answer. Yes, sir, they were all filed together. We never took any bids into the bureau after we commenced opening; and when those were torn off they were found to contain bids for lettered classes. Our own bids were all for figure classes, and in the other two bureaux the classes were lettered. These were torn off by Mr. Lenthall, and he ordered me to take them into Mr. Isherwood's bureau. I did so, and offered them to Mr. Neally, Mr. Isherwood's chief clerk.

"Question. On which day did you take them in?"

"Answer. On the second day of our opening. When I got in there Mr. Neally declined to take them, saying that they had closed their opening. I said to him that Mr. Lenthall had torn them from our bids—that they belonged to his bureau. He said that, as they had got through, he would not take them, but I might hand them to Mr. Isherwood. Mr. Isherwood was then out, but he came in while I was there talking with Mr. Neally, and I handed them to him, saying 'These belong to your bureau,' and I immediately went out.

"Question. Do you remember whether Mr. Brown went in with you or not?"

"Answer. My recollection is that Mr. Brown came in while I was there; he came in while I was going out of the door, and he said he was going in to see that his bids were properly sealed.

"Question. Was Mr. Murdock there at the time?"

"Answer. Yes, sir; Mr. Murdock was sitting at what is called the engineer's desk, his back to us.

"Question. State what occurred—what did Brown say on the subject?"

"Answer. When I started to go out of the door Brown wanted me to say to Mr. Isherwood that they had been torn from our bids, as they were. I told him that I had already said that to Mr. Isherwood, and I recollect saying to Mr. Isherwood that my opinion was that they had better be sealed, and, if they had any doubts, submit the question to the Department whether they should be accepted.

"Question. What did Mr. Isherwood reply to that?"

"Answer. I think Mr. Isherwood told Mr. Neally to scale them, and they would afterward settle whether they ought to be received or not.

"Question. I understand you to say that you carried in those bids yourself, of Stover, and handed them to Mr. Neally?"

"Answer. I carried them in myself. I offered them to Mr. Neally. He declined to take them, and I then handed them to Mr. Isherwood. They never went into Brown's hands until they had been in Mr. Isherwood's. There were bids of many parties torn off in the same way for Mr. Isherwood's bureau and the Bureau of Equipment.

"Question. The bids came into your bureau, it would seem, just as they had formerly, before the division of the bureau; and then looking over those bids, seeing some for construction, some for engineering, and some for equipment, you separated the classes and sent them around to the different bureaux where they properly belonged?"

"Answer. Yes, sir.

"Question. As to this particular bid of Stover's which Brown represented, are you positive that it was put in on the first day?"

"Answer. I am positive that it was put in there in the morning with all Stover's bids. They were all put in together by Mr. Brown. We never took a bid in our bureau after the openings com-

menced. Bids have been received at our bureau by mail arriving there the next day and have been scaled, leaving half a dozen lines between the regular scale and those that came in late, and the words 'Received too late' were marked opposite to them, and they were never considered in the awarding of contracts."

And then, after these witnesses had thus testified, Mr. Murdock was recalled

"Ira Murdock recalled and examined.

"By Mr. DOOLITTLE:

"Question. On your hearing Mr. Farwell state the facts in relation to what occurred there, does your recollection agree with his as to what he states?"

"Answer. Yes, sir; I should like to look at the scale of that bidding. [Scale shown to witness.] On examining the original scale, I find that Mr. Stover bid for four classes, that two were awarded to him, and on one class he was not a successful bidder. On the remaining class the bid was thrown out, there being no competitor and the price being exorbitant. On further reflection and examination of the scale, I desire to make this correction of the statement I made yesterday."

Mr. President, and Senators, when you come to look into this transaction and see it as it is, I undertake to say that there is not a shadow resting upon the official integrity of Mr. Isherwood. As to Mr. Lenthall there is certainly nothing within the lids of this volume which goes to reflect on his official integrity as an officer; nothing to show that there was any corruption or anything wrong, or at least any intentional wrong. He may have made mistakes, as other men make them; but that there was any intentional wrong on his part, or any corruption on his part, there is no evidence whatever to show.

Now, you may come down to the clerks in the Department. There was Mr. Farwell, who was the chief clerk of Mr. Lenthall's bureau. There was in the testimony given by Franklin W. Smith some hearsay evidence, which seemed for a moment to throw a suspicion upon Mr. Farwell. Smith stated to the committee that some other person had told him in the city of Boston that Farwell and Murdock, two of the clerks in the Department, had been purchasing some property near Boston and that their houses had been furnished, and intimating, not saying in so many words, that it was done for some kind of corrupt or improper services rendered by them in the Navy Department, they being clerks in that Department. When Mr. Pratt and Mr. Ellis, the two gentlemen who Mr. Smith said made this statement to him, were called upon the stand as witnesses, they denied that they had ever told Mr. Smith any such thing. It was mere hearsay anyhow. When Farwell and Murdock were called on the stand as witnesses and examined at length on these charges of their having purchased property or receiving something as a consideration for their action in the Department, I undertake to say that in their testimony they clearly and unequivocally explained it all, and there has not been a shadow resting on Farwell; and if suspicion rests on anybody it is on Murdock; but his testimony on this subject is clear and explicit.

I do not desire to take up the time of the Senate; but this point about corruption within the Navy Department and the corruption of the heads of bureaus and of clerks in the Department has been referred to so often that I feel called upon as a matter of duty both to these officers and to the country in whose service I am, that these charges so often repeated shall not go forth unchallenged to destroy the confidence of the people in the very officers that are administering the Government in this time of peril. On this subject Mr. Murdock was questioned, and I questioned him myself, among others. This is his testimony:

"By Mr. DOOLITTLE:

"Question. You say you reside in Bridgewater, Massachusetts; what is the name of the county?"

"Answer. Plymouth County.

"Question. Did you purchase a house and lot at Bridgewater not long ago?"

"Answer. Yes, sir. I held a mortgage on a house, and I took possession of it some year ago. The owner of the house was down in the southern country; he went there to live after the rebellion, and I think has been heard from not more than once or twice since he left.

"Question. Did he join the rebels, as you understand?"

"Answer. I do not know that he did; it is supposed that he did. His wife could not carry on the place. Circumstances were embarrassing at the time he left, and I paid her a certain sum of money, and took the house, with a guarantee from her brothers and his brothers in Boston—responsible men—that I should at a certain time receive a deed from him, which I have not received.

"Question. How much was your mortgage?"

"Answer. About five thousand dollars.

"Question. And how much did you give her?"

"Answer. Fifteen hundred dollars.

"Question. Do you know a gentleman in Boston by the name of Pratt, of the firm of Bowers, Pratt & Co.?"

"Answer. Yes, sir; very well."

Mr. Pratt was the person who it was said had made the statement in relation to Murdock, that he could be purchased in the Department.

"Question. Has Mr. Pratt given to you, or to your wife or family, in any way, direct or indirect, anything in consideration of any favor you may have done him connected with the Department or the Government?"

"Answer. Never a dollar."

And when you look into the testimony of Mr. Pratt and the testimony of Mr. Ellis, they both swear positively that no such thing ever did occur, and they never said to Smith that it did occur; and that, I confess, is one of those painful facts standing out in the case which have led me to doubt very much the good faith of this Smith in the testimony which he gave. These two witnesses swear positively that they never made to him any such statement as he stated they did; and the man himself swears positively that no such thing ever occurred. And what goes to show how perfectly baseless is this charge against the Department will appear when I tell you that this Mr. Murdock had not been in the employment of the De-

partment for a whole year before the investigation began by this committee; and yet the investigation was sought upon the basis of charges of fraud and corruption in that Department of the Government, more dangerous to the country even than the enemies in the field.

Mr. President, I rose only to speak upon one point, and that was to defend the official integrity of the men in this Department against these wholesale and sweeping charges. I challenge any Senator on any side of this Chamber to name the man in the Department; and I say that if, after months of investigation, you have not the evidence upon which you can point to this man, or that man, or the other, and say to him, "Thou art the man; I charge you with corruption," every tongue should be silent on this subject of official corruption in the Navy Department. I do not stand here to say that all that has been transacted in the navy-yard at Charlestown or New York is free from any charge of corruption. I do not undertake to know what has transpired there. I will not make charges without proof, and I am unwilling that charges should be made unless they are based upon proof.

Among other things it has been urged that the administration of that Department has been inefficient. Sir, a single fact is sufficient to answer all that. In what condition was that Department when it was taken possession of by Mr. Welles and the men under him? In what condition was the naval force of this country at the breaking out of this rebellion? Sir, our naval force under the last Administration, which was in sympathy with this very rebellion, had been sent to the four quarters of the world; not a single vessel remained to us except the Brooklyn, and she, drawing fourteen feet of water, could not enter any harbor on the southern coast with the exception of one or two. They had been sent to the uttermost parts of the sea for the very purpose of disarming the Government and rendering it powerless in the great conflict. And what have we seen? Steadily under the administration of this much-abused Navy Department we have seen that naval power growing month by month. We have seen it victorious at Hilton Head. We have seen it victorious at New Orleans, where the British and French admirals in command of their vessels in the Mississippi river at New Orleans declared that it was impossible for our naval vessels to be successful. We have seen it winning triumphs at Vicksburg, at Mobile, at Fort Fisher. Ay, Mr. President, under the direction and control of this much-abused Navy Department we have seen a naval force gathered together which, under the command of David Porter, in the attack upon Fort Fisher, had a power sufficient to have sunk the whole navy of Great Britain in six hours in a single fight. And all this great Navy has been gathered together in the short period of three or four years; and yet men speak of the inefficiency of the administration of the Navy Department. Sir, I go not into the details; I care not whether it is admi-

nistered by the Secretary-in-chief or by his Assistant Secretary; it is administered by somebody who has brains, power, energy, and will, and it has accomplished in the putting down of this rebellion that for which the American people in their heart of hearts ought to declare their unbounded gratitude and their undying thanks.

Mr. President, I do not purpose at all to go into other matters on this occasion. The honorable Senator from Iowa [Mr. GRIMES] is much better prepared than myself to speak upon the other great questions that have been raised in relation to the administration of this Department, and I shall forbear trespassing any longer upon the attention of the Senate.

## SPEECH OF HON. JAMES W. NYE, OF NEVADA.

IN THE SENATE.

Friday, February 17, 1865.

Mr. NYE said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: I think, as this debate has assumed somewhat of a discursive character, it is perhaps a fitting occasion for Nevada to utter her first voice in this august presence.

I have been interested, instructed, amused, and pained by the discussions here to-day. Every Senator, of course, is the judge of his own taste; but if I had been the Senator from New Hampshire mine would not have led me in the direction in which his taste has led him here to-day. So, too, of the Senator from Delaware. He has attempted to enlighten and instruct us upon the history of the old, glorious Democratic party; and he remarked that he had never seen, in the course of his observation, a person who had formerly belonged to that party who would acknowledge that he left it. I desire to gratify him now by an exhibition of one who has the manliness to admit that he left the Democratic party when it had ceased to do good and had learned so well to do evil.

I do not think that the honorable Senator from Delaware has studied carefully the history of the Democratic party; his recollections of its glory rest on tradition. He intimates that he was one among the few that had stood here for years, like the stripling of Israel against the giant of Gath, to defend its principles. The misfortune of the gentleman is that most of his former associates are to be found in the rebel army; that they lost their love and their affection for the institutions of their country and have raised their arm to destroy it. In an evil hour, when passion instead of judgment controlled their action, they ceased to honor and respect the olden glory of their party, and have literally, in their madness, deluged this continent in blood.

The Senator closed his speech with a word of encouragement to his own party to stand firm and rally around their standard. And pray, sir, who was your last standard-bearer? A man of whom in the history of this country is written the fact that he was *particeps criminis* in this wicked rebellion—a fit candidate for a party whose first and whose last Vice President was a rebel.

Sir, the remarks of the Senator from Delaware—he will pardon me for saying it (I believe in his heart he is loyal and right, but he lacks a little of that old Democratic firmness of which he boasts to assert it)—sound like what I heard while sitting in this gallery about four years ago; and the Senator will remember it, as it was during the closing scenes of his party's existence. I allude to the remarks of Mr. Wigfall, Mr. Breckinridge, and a host of others whose names I will not mention, who seemed to me to have fallen into that great error into which no man, and especially no statesman, should fall, and to have reached that point where their adoration for party rose higher than their devotion and duty to their Government.

Sir, I have a right to remember the history of the old Democratic party. I acted with it before the Senator was old enough to vote; and one of two things is true, that the Democratic party departed from its original glory, fell, literally fell, from its high estate, or I did not understand its principles when I voted with it. I had always understood him to be the best Democrat who loved his country most, and who would make the greatest sacrifices to sustain it. That was the Democracy that was taught to me. But in modern times it seems to be the crowning glory of a Democrat to do the most to tear down the temple of republican freedom. With that kind of Democracy I have no sympathy, no affiliation. I love the Democratic party, if I love it at all, for its ancient glory and usefulness, not for its modern dereliction and recreancy.

We are told by the honorable Senator that during the Democratic reign the writ of *habeas corpus* was never suspended. Let me, to show his error, call the honorable Senator's attention to two or three instances. When the first Democratic Vice President of the United States was about to be arrested for treason, General Wilkinson was intrusted with the arrest; and the President at that time, a Democrat as he is claimed, suspended the writ of *habeas corpus*, and placed that suspension in the hands of the officer who was charged with the arrest ere he left this Capitol.

The PRESIDENT *pro tempore*: The Senator from Nevada will pause. The hour of half past four o'clock having arrived, the Senate will now take a recess until seven o'clock.

### *Evening Session.*

Mr. NYE. At the time the recess was taken I was replying to the assertion of the honorable Senator from Delaware in regard to the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*, and had cited a well-known example of the exercise of the power to suspend it. Another illustrious man exercised that high prerogative, one whose Democracy even the honorable Senator from Delaware will not question. He found himself in New Orleans much in the position that some of our commanding generals have recently found themselves in other localities. He found there, at that early day, a modern Democrat, an editor of a paper, who published articles criticizing the conduct of the commanding general when he was facing the army of the enemy. He thought that the public interests and the public safety required that both the paper and the editor should be arrested; and the historian has not recorded that there was any process by which that editor was arrested save the order, the mandate of the commanding general. The editor was arrested, and there was then found by his side a judge of the modern Democratic school, ever ready to use this great writ of liberty when it is proposed to extricate or release one of his own belief; and Jackson thought that the public safety required that that judge too should be arrested. He was a Democrat with whom to think was to act, and he acted rightly and promptly, and caused the arrest. Sir, not exactly in this room, but in a room occupied by this honorable body, many years after, I heard the warmest, truest, highest eulogium passed upon the conduct of that brave man that ever fell from the lips of Democracy or from its opponents. This great nation through its representatives spoke approval of his conduct in language not to be misunderstood. They remitted the fine imposed upon the heropatriot and soldier. The glory that Jackson achieved there was only eclipsed by the subsequent glory of putting down the attempted rebellion of which modern Democracy was the father and nullification the object.

Therefore, sir, I take it that the honorable Senator had forgotten these noble examples at the time he made the assertion that the writ of *habeas corpus* had never been suspended until this Administration came into power. He had forgotten that the press that was charged with mischief and malignity was stopped or "muzzled" by Andrew Jackson. He seemed to pass over all this with a view of getting at once to the alleged enormities of this Administration.

Mr. President, I have no defense to make for this Administration. It needs none at my hands. It is seen, it is written, it is printed, it is impressed upon every lineament of this country. Its glory shall live when its traducers shall have died. This Administration came into

power at a moment when rebellion was commencing its mutterings, without an Army, with no Navy, or with what little we had scattered all over this continent. As the honorable Senator from Wisconsin has said, our Navy had to be gathered in from the remotest parts of the seas. Sir, it seems to me as though every Department of the Government on this occasion's demand had spoken as if by magic, a power into existence, that has been ample for the necessities of the times, wonderful in its creation, and yet more wonderful in its results.

Sir, this Administration has done more; and that, I take it, is the real cause of complaint, as well with the honorable Senator from Delaware as with those who think and act with him. It has produced a mighty moral and political revolution. Out of the fury that rebellion raised have issued glorious moral and political results. Sir, I am not one of those who call these the evil days of the history of our country. Far greater calamities may befall a nation than to be summoned to the fields of strife. Better that the land should be deluged with blood than that the spirit of liberty should be lost. Far better that every house should be draped in mourning than that republican freedom should be slain.

Sir, in the particular point about which I think the Senator from Delaware feels aggrieved is written the great glory of this Administration. It has spoken freedom to four million human beings that were in bondage. It has knocked the shackles from off the limbs of that number of slaves, and has given them freedom in their place. It has abolished those hateful words "master" and "slave," and they will be heard no more forever upon this continent. That is glory enough for one Administration, and reason enough, too, for those to complain of it who seem to have been chained a lifetime to the car of slavery by links the world could not sever.

Does the Senator from Delaware wish to bring us back again into the cold embrace of modern Democracy? Sir, what have been its fruits? Look upon every battle-field from the Potomac to the Gulf, and you see there in long mounds of new-made graves the fruits of the teachings of modern Democracy. Look at the long rows of your hospital beds, and hear there a voice which, if the heart is not adamant, will speak in terms to attract at least the attention of a modern Democrat.

Sir, I was willing to let this old Democratic party die, and I was willing that it should die and be buried without inquest. I believe it is a known principle of law that where the cause of death is positively known it is not necessary to call in a coroner. The Democratic party died of a disease of which the far seeing or short-sighted might see it would die sooner or later. It died of what the eloquent Curran called "the doldrums"—a confusion of the head arising from the corruption of the heart. (Laughter.) The cause of death being well known, no coroner was called. It needed no verdict from a jury to advertise to the world the cause of the death of the Democratic party.

But, sir, I am frank to confess that the two Democratic Presidents who had suspended the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* in former times differed materially from the character of Democrats in these days. They were Union men; they believed in upholding the pillars of our institutions, while modern Democracy seems to have taught the doctrine that our duty is to tear them down. This is the difference. The President, in times of revolution that have past, would have been held up to the scorn and derision of present and future generations if he had failed to do otherwise than suspend this writ.

Will the honorable Senator from Delaware tell you, sir, and this body, the exact condition in which the Democracy left the administration and the affairs of this Government? At the time the people rose in their majesty and wrested the sceptre of power from the Democratic party the very atmosphere by which we were surrounded was thick with the fragments of dissolving empire. I have envied modern Democracy only in one thing, and that is, the perfect composure they exhibit while the evidences of portentous mischief to the country are all around them. They seem to fold their hands in meek submission to the grossest insults to which our country has been subjected. I know that it is not in the honorable Senator's heart to do this; but he is much in the position that many Democrats have been before. He lacks the courage, not physical, but moral, to break away from this corpse upon which he invokes an inquest. In olden times, as I have read, they had a strange punishment for the higher order of offences. They chained the offender to a corpse, and made him drag it around till decay did its work and the body disappeared. I hope the honorable Senator from Delaware will soon cut the cord by which he is bound to that dead body, and let modern Democracy go where the verdict of the world has declared it ought to go, into utter oblivion.

Who would take us back again into the embrace of the last Democratic President, whose longer embrace would have been death? Where are now to be found the time-honored Democrats of whom the Senator speaks? Where is the President of the confederate States? Go ask him to-night what his politics are, and he will tell you he is a Democrat of the purest character. Go ask Toombs, and Hunter, and Mason, and Slidell, and Wigfall what their politics are, and they will chant you anthems to the glory of Democracy. Their Democracy has found its true status; it is arrayed with bloody steel against the glory and the integrity of this country. Thank God! there are thousands less of these Democrats now than there were when this rebellion broke out. Many of them have met their just deserts, and unless they speedily repent and submit themselves to the justice, the mercy, and the laws of their country, their numbers will be so diminished as not to cause any apprehension in regard to their future.

I find fault with modern Democrats for this: they seem to be willing and anxious to punish

all crimes except the crime of treason. When one Department of our Government is arraigned before this body by the honorable Senator from New Hampshire, the face of my distinguished friend from Delaware glows with unusual brightness, and he is anxious to join the honorable Senator from New Hampshire to punish frauds. Oh, the horror and the wickedness of these frauds! But the modern Democrats are not willing that the highest crime known to our law, treason, should be punished. Not a day passes by, not a paper that represents them do we read, but that is crying out for peace, honorable terms of peace, no terms that will look to subjugation, none that could mortify the pride of their brother Democrats; and now, when this great nation that has walked upright amid the scenes through which we have passed, which, when the last star of hope grew pale, redoubled its courage, has beaten them upon every field, these modern Democrats want honorable peace and no penalties for treason inflicted! The law declares that if a man is guilty of larceny he shall be punished; if he is guilty of murder he shall be hanged; and the Constitution and the laws both declare that the penalty for treason is death; and yet there is not a modern Democrat that I have heard speak that does not want that penalty to be unenforced against those whose hands are red with the patriot blood of their fellow-countrymen.

Sir, I should not have occupied the attention of the Senate one moment on this question had I not come from a State just born into our glorious Union; a State the youngest in the sisterhood of States; a mountain State; and I rejoice that she proves the truth of the old saying that liberty is a mountain nymph. In our constitution we have put the negative upon all these modern Democratic pretensions of the rights of States when arrayed against the majesty of the Government. It is a State rich in mineral productions, but whose material wealth is poor when compared with the undying loyalty of her people. That new State, although the marks of her swaddling-clothes are yet around her, would rise up and condemn me should I sit here and listen to the invitations wooing us back into the embrace of this modern Democratic party; and above all would she arraign me before the bar of her judgment, if I should silently suffer the Administration, that we have loved so well, to be defamed here in the house of its friends, and the imputations of its challengers listened to in silence.

I do not know but that there is something wrong in the Navy Department. The Senator from Wisconsin says there is not. The Senator from New Hampshire, who seems to have a special mission to perform with that Navy Department—for what reason I do not know—says there is. Sir, it would be strange, indeed, if there was not something wrong in all the Departments of this Government, hurried, as it was, from a quiet slumber of peace to the creation and command of the mightiest armies and navies of the world, which had to have their growth as rapid as the growth of the

gourd in the night. It would be passing strange if there was not some corruption in these Departments. I have never believed that it made much difference with the purity of men to what particular party they belonged, or to what particular religious denomination. Men are but men; and sometimes they fall victims to their cupidity. I could cite many such instances in the Democratic period to my friend from Delaware that he would well remember; but yet the Democratic party did not make much noise about them. Unlike my friend, the Senator from New Hampshire, they never told of them, if they knew of them; they kept the knowledge of them in their own breasts.

Mr. Fox may be wrong. If he is, put another man in his place. My friend from New Hampshire says that he has no doubt the Secretary of the Navy himself is an honest man. No one ever doubted that. In this connection the Senator from Delaware will pardon me if I remind him that the Secretary voted the Democratic ticket while the Senator's cheek was yet covered with the dew of youth, and learned, I grant, to be honest in the olden times of genuine Democracy, when the party as a whole were honest. Sir, when the history of these times shall be written it will stand out in bold relief, and form one of its brightest pages, that with the incalculable expenditure we have been called upon to make, very little of it has adhered to the palms of those who were charged with the duty of its disbursement.

The Senator from New Hampshire says that these iron-clads are failures. Sir, at least one of them was not a failure. If all the others should sink and find their harbor, as he suggests, in the bottom of the sea, that first-born Monitor has written a history of glory for this country that will never die. It defeated with a single shot the monster creation of the rebellion, and drove her back crippled and wounded to her hiding-place, from which she never again emerged, but found her destiny deep buried in the fathomless ocean sands. If the rest are all failures that is enough. But, sir, they are not failures; there is much less of failure about them than might reasonably have been expected in these wonderful naval creations—creations that to-day make old England sing in a whisper she is the mistress of the seas; a Navy that keeps the imperial ruler of France from sending his army and navy to find harbors and gold and silver upon our Western shores.

I thought it unwise in the Senator from New Hampshire to advertise these iron-clads as failures; but after all I do not know that it was. Let those who desire to invade our rights try it, and these much-abused vessels will not only vindicate themselves, but put to flight the invader. This Navy that was created so magically attracts the attention of the whole world; and while Great Britain and France have been anxious to write on parchment the acknowledgment of the independence of the southern Democratic Confederacy they saw the fifteen-inch muzzles of our iron-clads, well loaded, and hesitated; and our Navy made them hesitate.

I hope, Mr. President, that all the appropriations that are needed to perfect this Navy will be freely voted by this body. I desire to see it of sufficient magnitude to be a standing advertisement to the world that we are not only able to put down rebellion at home, but are able to resist invasion from without.

Sir, it is too late in the day to talk of economizing. This modern Democratic party that led us up to the shambles have put it out of our power to economize. Two things are certain: this rebellion must be put down; it will be put down; and another thing is just as certain, that when it is put down the nations of the earth will have notice that we are prepared to defend ourselves against the open as well as the covert attacks of an opposing world.

I hope, sir, that all the appropriations that this careful, scrutinizing committee calls for will be voted by the Senate. I know the care with which the chairman of this committee investigates and reports, and upon his suggestion that certain appropriations are necessary. Nevada—I think I can speak for my colleague—will give two votes without any reference to the magnitude of what is required. Yonder mountains are full of the material with which to pay the national obligation. Providence has kindly stored away in the lofty mountains of Nevada, and Idaho, and Oregon treasure enough to make the debt which we now owe, or may owe at the conclusion of this bloody war, dwindle and dwarf into insignificance. Open up to us a way by which we can get the means of producing it, and we can as well give you \$500,000,000 a year as the \$30,000,000 that we annually send you now. Sir, I know of no debt that is too mighty for a nation to incur to save its freedom. I know of no debt that should stand between us and the putting down of this rebellion.

## SPEECH OF HON. A. H. RICE, OF MASSACHUSETTS.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

*February 3, 1865.*

THE House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union (Mr. WASHBURN, of Illinois, in the chair), and resumed the consideration of the bill (H. R. No. 676) making appropriations for the naval service for the year ending June 30, 1866, the pending question being the amendment submitted by Mr. DAVIS, of Maryland, to add to the bill the following:—

*Provided*, That no money appropriated for the naval service shall be expended otherwise than in accordance with the following provisions, so far as it is applicable; that is to say, that the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint a Board of Admiralty, which shall consist of the vice-admiral and one rear admiral, one commodore, one captain, one commander, and one lieutenant commander, over which the Secretary of the Navy or the officer highest in rank present shall preside; and when the subject under consideration shall appertain to the duties of any bureau in the Navy Department, the chief of such bureau shall be a member of the board, and entitled to sit and vote on the consideration of the subject.

SEC. — *And be it further enacted*, That the board shall deliberate in common and advise the Secretary on any matters submitted by him relating to naval organization, naval legislation, the construction, equipment, and armament of vessels, navy-yards, and other naval establishments, and the direction, employment, and disposition of the naval forces in time of war. All such opinions shall be recorded.

SEC. — *And be it further enacted*, That no vessel-of-war shall be built or materially altered, nor any guns of new construction ordered or adopted, nor any engine for any vessel-of-war adopted or ordered, nor any permanent structure for naval service executed, until the plans, estimates, proposals, and contracts for the same shall have been submitted to the board, and its opinion and advice thereon communicated in writing to the Secretary; nor shall any patented invention be bought or adopted for the naval service without first the opinion of the board thereon having been taken; and all experiments decided to test inventions and naval plans and structures shall be conducted under the inspection of the board, or members thereof named by the Secretary, and submitted to the board for its opinion thereon.

SEC. — *And be it further enacted*, That all inventions for plans or proposals for any of the works above mentioned shall be prepared by the board, subject to the approval of the Secretary; and all bids, or offers, or proposals for the same shall be opened in the presence of the board, and the award made by it, subject to the approval of the Secretary.

SEC. — *And be it further enacted*, That the Secretary may add to the board from time to time other officers of the Navy eligible to the position of chief of bureau, not exceeding three at any time, for consultation on any of the above subjects. The board may take the opinion of eminent practical engineers, mechanics, machinists, and architects, in their respective branches of art or industry, when in their opinion the public service will be promoted by it, and pay them such reasonable compensation as the Secretary may approve.

Mr. RICE, of Massachusetts, said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am at the present time very ill prepared to reply to the remarks which have been made by the honorable gentleman from Maryland; but I am not willing that this speech shall have been made in this House and pass out to the country without my saying a single word upon the subject, although I am obliged to speak without special preparation and in the absence of certain statistics which would be most valuable to me if I had them here at hand.

It is but natural, too, that I should rise under some embarrassment, with some feelings of diffidence, to reply upon the spur of the moment to the elaborate speech which has been delivered by the honorable gentleman from Maryland, a speech for which, it is quite manifest, he had made a careful collection of such statistics as might serve his purpose, and in which he has discussed the subject in hand with that degree of warmth and enthusiasm which is apt to arise from the fervor of some measure of personal hostility.

I think the gentleman has been unfortunate in the selection of the proposition which he has submitted to the House. It is, sir, nothing more nor less than that this Congress and the Navy Department of the United States shall throw away all the teachings of experience, both at home and abroad, and shall take a retrograde step, placing the administration of our naval affairs where it was nearly a century ago.

The honorable gentleman has taken occasion, in the opening portion of his remarks, to refer to the action of the Committee on Naval Affairs upon the bill which he has discussed, and which he has brought in here and submitted, I think, contrary to all rule and to all precedent, as an amendment to an appropriation bill, and before there was opportunity for the Committee on Naval Affairs, to whom that subject had been referred, to present the report upon which they had concluded long before his amendment was offered.

Now, sir, I desire to say for the members of that committee, that if any gentleman in this House chooses to call in question their diligence, their industry, and their patience, let him resort to the room, and to the records of the committee, and find how far their patience has been tried and their time absorbed by useless investigations thrown upon their hands in a resolution submitted by the honorable gentleman from Maryland, during the last session of Congress.

Sir, the resolution to which I allude was a sweeping one, aimed at no particular point, looking to the correction of no particular evil; but one starting out this Committee on Naval Affairs upon an exploring expedition to ransack the whole transactions of the Naval Department; the mysteries of the construction of steam machinery, and the investigation of professional and scientific, as well as of practical questions. The subjects for investigation ran also into matters of personal quarrels; into the connection of alleged and fictitious abuses on the part of persons connected with the Navy Department, and into other acts through the agency of other persons which I will not consume the time of the House, or tire its patience even by relating. The character of this labor and its results are to be found in the report of the Naval Committee recently submitted to the House.

Now, sir, in prosecuting the labor imposed by that resolution alone, the Committee on Naval Affairs consumed more than seventy sittings during the last session of Congress, an average of three days every week of the session from the time the resolution was offered; and the investigation, with all the diligence, all the labor, and all the care which could be bestowed, was not concluded until the very last days of June. And since the present session of Congress convened it has devolved upon the committee to prepare a report covering that vast mass of documentary evidence and testimony which the House, affrighted by its magnitude, refused on Monday last to allow to be printed. It has been necessary during this session to examine and analyze that whole testimony, to collect all the facts and statistics, to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to select that which was true out of that which was false, and to report the result to the House. And, sir, without instituting any invidious comparison between the labors and diligence of that committee and those of any other committee of this House, I should do great injustice to my colleagues upon that committee if I did not bear testimony to the fact that neither their personal convenience nor comfort has been allowed to interfere with the diligent discharge of their duties. So much, sir, in regard to the amount of labor and attention which have been bestowed by the Committee on Naval Affairs upon the subject referred to them by the gentleman from Maryland.

The question of the expediency of putting the Navy Department under the surveillance of a board of examiners, or a board of administration, the committee proceeded to consider

as soon as they could gain time from the pressure of other and more important matters; and, as I said before, weeks ago they were ready to submit their action and conclusions to this House as soon as its rules would permit, and, if necessary to do so, to submit the reasons for the decision to which they arrived.

Now, I desire to say here, that the report which the committee are ready to make whenever they have an opportunity, is adverse to the proposition submitted by the honorable gentleman from Maryland, [Mr. DAVIS,] and if the House will indulge me I will proceed to state, with as much brevity as the circumstances permit, some of the reasons which have led us to that conclusion. The proposition of the honorable gentleman is substantially that the Navy Department of the United States shall be put under a similar kind of administration to that by which the British navy is at present controlled; and I need not say to any gentleman who has examined that subject, that the British Board of Admiralty is to-day, of all administrative things in England, the most unpopular among the people and Government of that nation.

The administration of the navy of Great Britain was vested originally in an officer called the "Lord High Admiral of the British Navy," an office which has not been filled, except for a very short period, for nearly one hundred and eighty years, the exception being its occupation by the Duke of Clarence in 1827; at all other times it has been placed in commission, as the phrase is, a commission consisting of two lords, four commissioners, and two secretaries, the incumbents being so appointed and retired as to be in harmony and sympathy with the dominant party in the Government for the time being. And what has been the result? Just precisely what one would expect would be the result of the action of an organization having no individual responsibility, and feeling the stimulus of no executive power.

We all know that after the accession of Louis Napoleon to the throne of France, and when that wonderful man commenced, as he did almost immediately, to bestow his attention upon the condition of the navy of that empire, and its comparative magnitude and prowess with that of Great Britain, Parliament and the British people were both intensely excited at the rapid strides France was making in the construction of a great navy, and the periodicals and the leading men of Great Britain in Parliament summoned to the bar of public opinion this irresponsible and inactive Board of Admiralty, that they might, if possible, give an account of how it happened that the British navy had gone into disrepute, and was so far behind everything which it should have been when compared with the wants of the nation, or the vast sums of money expended upon it; and four years ago, when the war broke out in this country, and the stupendous achievements that were made by the Navy Department of the United States, in constructing our naval force, became known across the water, they also attracted the attention of the Government and

the people of Great Britain, and now, more than ever before, public opinion condemned the inefficiency of this Board of Admiralty, and interrogated them to show why it was that when France was making these rapid strides, and the Government of the United States was outstripping France even, the British Board of Admiralty sat supinely in their seats and were doing absolutely nothing to preserve the relative naval force of Great Britain.

The United Service Magazine, published in London, a high British authority, said in 1862, while discussing the British admiralty system, that—

“There is something so clumsy in the machinery of a board that the leading statesmen of all parties who have of late years devoted their attention to the reconstruction of the large Government departments, have given their opinion against this mode of conducting public business.”

The select committee on military organization, which sat in 1860, and which was composed chiefly of Prime Ministers and ex-Prime Ministers, of Secretaries and ex-Secretaries of State, of First Lords and ex-First Lords of the Admiralty, also reported as follows, upon Lord Grey's proposal that the army should be governed by a board:—

“This board would be a new experiment; it undoes all that has been done;” \* \* \* “instead of concentrating responsibility it redistributes it. The machinery of boards is known to be cumbersome and uncertain in its operation; it only works well when the head of it acts as if he alone were responsible. A board, therefore, would be a retrograde measure, which we cannot recommend.”

According to the same authority:—

“Even Sir James Graham, who favors the continuance of the present system of naval administration, states that if the command of the navy were a new machinery to be constructed he should not wish to have a board such as the Board of Admiralty.”

Other leading men and authorities have spoken of this board in even stronger terms of disfavor, as a feeble and unsatisfactory mode of administering the Navy, and this in such numbers as to lead one to suppose that nothing but the proverbial unwillingness to make a radical change in any part of their governmental organization would tolerate its continuance. And let me call attention to the fact that it is not against the *personnel* of this Board of Admiralty that the objection lies, but against the system itself; for the Board of Admiralty of Great Britain has from time to time embraced some of the wisest, some of the most experienced, and some of the most judicious naval authorities in Great Britain. But during all the time of its existence down to the present it has hardly been able promptly and efficiently to put forth the efforts which were necessary to provide against the exigencies of war which at all times are liable to occur. As I have already shown, British authorities, who have investigated for themselves the subject, declare in their periodicals, reports, and speeches, that this Board of Admiralty is an organization

which is defective in its very nature, and therefore it cannot be made of paramount value by the administration of any men, however efficient, excellent, and experienced they may be. Yet this, let me say, is substantially the system which the honorable gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Davis), if I understand him, desires we shall establish here; a system which after a test of more than two hundred years in Great Britain is more than almost anything else connected with their Government in disrepute, both with the Government and with the people, and has singularly failed in presenting any positive advantage, as the present condition of the British navy shows. This is the system which the honorable gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Davis) desires us to institute here. This is the kind of trammel that he desires to put over the chief officer of our Navy Department.

I have alluded to the accession of Louis Napoleon to the throne of France, and to the immediate attention which he bestowed upon the construction of the navy of that empire, and to the effect which the naval movements of France have had upon Great Britain. I need not inform this committee that the navies of France and Great Britain are constructed almost wholly with reference to a single point, and that is, the relative power of the two nations. They are rivals in everything, and jealous of each other. They are hostile to each other, and their hostility and their jealousy extend to everything connected with the interests or with the power of either of those nations.

Now, sir, as soon as the Emperor of France looked out upon what was supposed to be the formidable navy of Great Britain, and which indeed was formidable among the navies of the world at that period, he found that if he were to secure his throne, if he were to maintain the dignity of France, if he were to retain the fealty and the confidence of his subjects, he must provide a power that should be able to meet the navy of Great Britain on any sea, and that should be able to protect the coast of France against any assaults that might be made by Great Britain. Therefore, sir, the construction of the English navy and of the French navy has, as I have said, in a great degree become a reciprocal operation. When Great Britain builds a ship, then France builds a ship; and when France builds an iron-clad, Great Britain must build an iron-clad; and so they go on multiplying day after day, and year after year—not because of any particular exigency that is pressing upon those nations at the moment, but because neither can afford to be behind the other in the number and the armament of its ships.

Well, sir, Louis Napoleon is known to the world. When he ascended the throne of France he became France. He is that voltaic battery placed on the seat of power in the nation, whose touch sends the vital impulses throughout his whole empire. He is the head of the navy of France, as he is the head of everything else that is great connected with that nation. He wants no boards of admiralty to sit down and dream over what in some possible exigency

it may be expedient to do. He wants no board of admiralty that shall hamper the progress of the French armies or navies when the exigency arrives. But he, sir, is the living and the vitalizing power, and when he speaks the word it is done; when he commands, every man and everything under the power and control of the French nation stands fast to service and duty.

The administration of the French navy, therefore, is a totally different organization from that of the British Admiralty. The British Admiralty is responsible to nobody. Each board is moreover involved with its successor and with its predecessor, as a serpent involves its coils; and if there be faults or omissions arising in the administration of the navy, it is almost as impossible to fix the precise point of responsibility among these successive boards of admiralty as it is to fix the precise point of motive power in a serpent's body. The board of administration of France is, on the contrary, an organization having, through all departments, the element of individual responsibility and of special attention. Every man who has a duty to perform in connection with the administration of the French navy is responsible; he can be ferreted out; the exact measure of his responsibility can be fastened upon him; and everybody knows what is the fate of an irresponsible or unfaithful officer before the man who sits upon the French throne.

Now, sir, the gentleman from Maryland in proposing this measure has not only run contrary to the experience of France and of England upon this subject, but he proposes to leap over the whole period of time during which this Government has had an existence. Why, sir, when the navy of the United States first came into being, in 1775, we then had a Marine Committee. In 1776 we had what was called a Continental Navy Board. In 1779 we had a BOARD OF ADMIRALTY. In 1798 a Navy Department was established, with a Secretary of the Navy. In 1815 we had a Board of Navy Commissioners appointed. In 1842 all these irresponsible boards, these debating societies organized to discuss and to settle the principles upon which our navy should be constructed and administered, were wiped out of the way, under the experience which the Government had had through this long period, and a Navy Department, substantially like that which we now have, was established. We got along very well from 1842 up to 1862, the second year of this war, under the Navy Department as it was organized in 1842. And, sir, what did the wisdom of Congress determine after two years of experience amid the trials of this war, added to the long experience in a peace establishment? What did the wisdom of Congress decide was expedient to be done in 1862, when the height of the pressure of this war was upon us, when new exigencies were arising every day, when there was a demand for the loftiest and broadest wisdom and experience that the country could furnish in respect to the best method of administering the navy? Why, sir, it did not establish a board of admiralty; it did not establish

a board of commissioners; it did not run across the water and adopt the system of admiralty which the Government of Great Britain was just then trying earnestly and laboriously to dispense with. But Congress did amplify the existing Navy Department, changing none of its material features, but enlarging it to meet the added necessities which were brought upon it and upon the country by this gigantic war.

So, sir, it is only two years since the Navy Department was reorganized and indorsed in its present form; and I hazard nothing in saying that, as a department, I think it is the most complete, and among the most efficient and responsible of all the Departments of the Government. It approximates nearer to the idea of a department than does any other branch of the executive power of this land that I know of. We have at its head a Secretary of the Navy; and under him are subdivisions of the department, eight in number, styled bureaux, each of which bureaux has its own specialty, with its own officer placed at its head, men of broad experience, and versed in the particular subjects and duties they are called upon to consider and discharge; men who are responsible both to the country and to Congress, and to the head of the Navy Department, inasmuch as they stand in conspicuous positions, and cannot screen from observation the nature and character of their duties, or the manner in which they perform them. Each head of a bureau is supposed to know everything in detail belonging to the particular branch of naval duty which belongs to that bureau, and to have the executive ability to bring his work to completion. He makes up the annual estimate of the amount which will be required to be expended upon the particular objects of that bureau; but he cannot expend a single dollar of the money which Congress appropriates for the navy, nor enter into any engagement, except by the permission of the Secretary of the Navy himself; so that under this system, we have combined the advantages of individual skill and responsibility supervised, and ultimately controlled by a general head.

The head of each one of these bureaux is therefore directly responsible to the chief of the Navy, and yet the chief of the Navy is not hampered by the divided counsel of those bureau chiefs. He is the man who, after all, is called upon to stand up before Government and people and assume the responsibility of whatever appertains to the administration of that department of the public service.

So, sir, we have in the amendment of the gentleman from Maryland no new proposition whatever, but one which we have already tried, improved upon, and discarded.

But the honorable gentleman says no other country has such a system as our own.

Well, sir, if I mistake not, it is no novel or strange thing for the United States to be found differing from the rest of the world either in the nature of its Government or in its administration. If I remember rightly, there are many particulars in which the progress of this nation, and in which the means and facilities and power

of this nation, differ and have always differed from any other nation on the face of the earth.

And I will say just here that I have no prepossession for or any prejudice against anything, whether it appertains to the Navy or to any other Department of the Government, because it is or is not foreign in its origin and use. I recognize the fact that there are many things appertaining to the Governments and the people of nations of the earth which are specialties of their own, which are national peculiarities, immediately recognized and known of all men, but they do not necessarily constitute in themselves standards of merit; and simply because a thing is or is not found elsewhere, does not bring to my mind any argument for either adopting it or dismissing it here, except so far as it may have been proved to be valuable or useless by the experience of other nations or our own. I hold that the experience of mankind is the property of mankind; and if it be true that whoever, acting as an individual or as a member of a Government, disregards the experience of the world, may travel possibly into a slough of trouble and difficulty from which that experience might have saved him, it is also true that if a man plant himself entirely upon that which some other man has experienced under the same or different conditions and circumstances, his fate will be hardly happier than that of him whom I have described in antithesis.

Now, it will be seen that the proposition submitted by the gentleman from Maryland is not in favor anywhere in the world where it has been submitted to the test of experience. It will be found that it has been tried already, over and over again, in a great variety of forms, and that it has been cast aside because it has been proved here to be, as it will prove to be wherever it is tried, irresponsible, inefficient, and uncertain in its operation.

But, Mr. Chairman, I think no man who has listened to the speech delivered by the honorable gentleman from Maryland can have failed to see that he had a double purpose in making it, and that his amendment was only a precursor, and a small one at that, to the real object which he had in view. In the hour and a half or three-quarters during which he discussed this subject, he spent but a very small portion of it in elaborating or elucidating facts or arguments in support of the establishment of a board of naval administration, while he did occupy the larger portion of his time in discussing what he is pleased to indicate as the faults and failures of the Navy of the United States.

I remember, sir, because I am reminded of it by the speech of the gentleman from Maryland, that this proposition which he has introduced here was made as long ago as last April. It seems to me that if the question of the efficiency or of the failure of the Navy of the United States is to be discussed in the interest of those who complain, it would have been much better, in the light of history and of events, for the gentleman to have discussed it at the time when it was originally submitted.

Let us see, sir, what are some of the facts in regard to this Navy, which the gentleman would have us bring into disrepute, which he would have us put under surveillance, which he would have us hamper with a Board of Admiralty, to discuss every topic, great or small, that should arise in the service. All the resources of the country, vast as they are, whether public or private, have been brought into requisition, in one form or another, to deliver the country from the perils in which it was involved by this gigantic civil war. I need not remind members of this committee that in December, 1860, the State of South Carolina passed an ordinance of secession, to take that State out of the Union, and that early in the following year several of the Gulf States followed the example of South Carolina, so that before the President was inaugurated in March, 1861, and before any of the Departments were organized in harmony with the head of the Government, and in accordance with the legally expressed will of the people of the country, some seven or eight States had already left the Union, as far as it was possible for them to do so, by passing ordinances of secession. Gentlemen need not be reminded that before the Navy Department was organized there was not a single place between Chesapeake Bay and the Rio Grande, on the Atlantic coast or on the Gulf coast, that was not in possession of the rebels. They need not be reminded that, in taking possession of this vast extent of territory, the rebels also took possession of two of the five navy-yards belonging to the United States, one of them the most important of all the navy-yards of the country, that of Norfolk. Not only did the rebels capture these navy-yards, but they captured some of our ships in them, and a vast amount of ordinance and naval supplies. They captured at the Norfolk navy-yard more than two thousand pieces of heavy ordnance, three hundred of which were Dahlgren guns, more also at Pensacola, and a vast amount of small arms and naval stores.

In what condition was the country then left—with more than thirty-five hundred miles of sea-coast and with more than thirty-five hundred miles of navigable inland waters to take care of? What means did the Government then possess for the performance of that mighty and stupendous work? Our whole Navy consisted at that time of but forty-six vessels, and of these nearly one-half were out of commission. A part of those that were in commission were on foreign stations, and at the time of the secession of the rebel States there were but four naval vessels left available to the Government of the United States with which to proceed to reclaim the navy-yards, forts, and territory that had been seized by the rebels, in accordance with the avowed purpose of the President of the United States, to which both Houses of Congress, and a vast majority of the people heartily responded.

Here was the work; to recover and to guard this vast extent of sea-coast and inland waters, to be done with old ships, if at all, or to be done by new means and instrumentalities de-

vised by that man who holds the responsible position of Secretary of the Navy. Does any one suppose, sir, that it would have been possible for the Secretary of the Navy to have built ships enough to have guarded the whole coast of the Atlantic, from the capes of the Chesapeake to the Rio Grande, and to navigate the inland waters of the country, wresting them, place by place, one after another, from the hands of the rebels, if he had had to wait until he could build the ships, and cast and finish the ordnance necessary to perform this gigantic undertaking? It is an absurdity to make such a suggestion. Then I want to know what was left open for the Secretary of the Navy to do but just precisely that which he did do, and which is here at this time made the subject of hostile criticism and animadversion by the honorable gentleman from Maryland. [Mr. Davis.] He went out to his countrymen, and said to them: "Give me your ships; give me your yards; give me your foundries; give me your machine-shops; give me your rope-walks; give me everything that you have suited to the purpose, in order that I may, according to the best of my ability, use them for my country, and while you and I stand alike in the face of mankind to be tried by its judgment, as to whether we can or cannot accomplish this gigantic undertaking, while the friends of despotism, and the enemies of republics are looking on and hoping that we shall fail, I ask you to come forward and give your ships, and your facilities, be they what they may, in order that we may vindicate the patriotism, skill, and capacity of American workmen and people, in quenching this fire of rebellion; that we may have the pleasure, the inexpressible and unbounded pleasure, of showing to mankind that however great your disadvantages, that however small the resources at the command of the Government, yet, when the national life is assailed, there is no limit to the power which the American people will bring out for the use of their Government to enable them to save the national life from any hand by which it may be assailed, whether it be foreign or domestic."

The appeal of the Secretary of the Navy did not go out to his countrymen unregarded and unheeded. They responded to it. They brought out every ship that was available for naval service, and put them at the disposal of the Navy Department; and the Navy Department availed itself to the utmost of the ability of our citizens, limited only by the resources of the country, in procuring ships and ordnance and men and material of every kind, to enable it to carry out the gigantic undertaking that rebels and traitors had forced upon its hands. Nor did it act unwisely in this particular. If gentlemen can translate themselves from this present hour, in February, 1865, back to 1861, and contemplate the necessity that then existed of contributing in any manner and in every manner of the resources of the country; if they can recall the anxiety they then felt that the Navy should do all that it could, and vastly more than it was doing, I think that in that state of mind they will not be prepared to condemn the

Navy Department because it availed itself of the ships of the merchant service when there were none belonging to the Navy, and when all the yards of the Government, and all the shops of the country were working night and day, and were all totally inadequate to supply the immediate and pressing exigencies under which the Government was then laboring.

The honorable gentleman comments upon the character of these merchant vessels, and dwells upon the absurdity of counting them in among the naval resources of the country. But I think that, if he had dwelt upon the topic in all its lights and all its bearings, he could not have failed to discover that, under that generic term "the Navy," there is a great variety of duty to be performed, and that there is duty that can be performed as well, or nearly as well, by vessels that were built for the merchant service as by those which were built expressly for the naval service.

But passing from this point, for it is not worth while to discuss it in the light of the facts, the alternative then presented was, will you have these ships or will you have no ships? Will you do all you can to arrest the progress of this rebellion, or will you sit down supinely, as a board of admiralty might have done, sucking your thumbs and saying that the undertaking is totally beyond the capacity and genius of the American people to enter upon and to accomplish? Not only was the Government without vessels and without ordnance, but in the first year of the war, out of the small number of officers that composed the Navy two hundred and fifty-nine resigned or went over to the enemy, in order that they might command the ships and make use of the ordnance which they had stolen from the Government of the United States at Norfolk and Pensacola and elsewhere. So that our losses were not only losses to ourselves in ships and material, but they were gains in the same kind and degree to the rebels; and they gained in addition a large number, if not all, of the one hundred and fifty-nine officers of the American Navy to make use of those ships and of those materials.

Well, sir, during this year 1861, starting in the spring with only four vessels available for the whole uses of this gigantic war, to blockade all the southern ports, to recover all the places that had been stolen from us, to open the great internal channels of commerce—starting, I say, with those four vessels, before the close of the year 1861, the first year of the war, during a period of only about nine months, the number increased from four vessels to two hundred and twenty-six. This is the work accomplished, so far as outfitting the navy is concerned, by this Department in the first nine or ten months of the war. During the second year that number was increased to between three and four hundred. During the next year, if I remember rightly, it rose up to more than five hundred and eighty. And now, sir, at the end of the fourth year, we have a Navy of six hundred and seventy-one vessels; not all built on one plan, not all built of one size, not all built of

one fashion and for one use, as the honorable gentleman from Maryland would seem to imply by his argument would have been judicious, but various in their construction and appliances, adapted to the ever-changing, ever-new exigencies and necessities of this great war.

Now, sir, not to leave entirely out of sight the value of the advice that may be derived from a board of consultation, I desire to state here that, while all the responsibility settles down upon the head of the Navy, and upon the chiefs of the Bureaux of the Navy Department, yet, sir, without a board of administration which it is obliged by the force of law to consult and to defer to, the Navy Department has hardly taken a single step of great importance without summoning, as the chief of that Department has the undoubted right to do, a board of consultation and advice from those who are experienced in the Navy in commanding our ships, experienced in all the details of war, as well as in all naval literature and practice, that he might have the benefit both of their experience and of their professional knowledge. Those boards have been constituted over and over again as specialities have demanded. They have not been exceptional cases; they have been the rule rather than the exception. And the Secretary of the Navy, feeling that it rested upon him to take the responsibility, to assume accountability for what shall be actually done, without regard to the character of the advice which he may receive, has, after hearing the opinions that have been expressed by those whom he has consulted, moved forward in accordance with the dictates of his own judgment, to do those things which he believed to be best for the interest of the country and the accomplishment of the gigantic work which he had in hand.

Why, sir, almost immediately after the Administration was organized, it became indispensable that there should be certain points upon the Atlantic coast recovered and put in possession of the Government as depots for naval supplies, as places of resort for vessels that were doing duty on the Atlantic. And what did the Secretary of the Navy do? Why, sir, he did not send in here and ask you to give him a board of naval administration, but he sent out to some of the most experienced officers of the Navy, to those who were most familiar with the coast; and he sent to the Coast Survey office; he had all the geography of the country and all the knowledge and experience of the country bearing upon the topic laid before him; and the opinion of a commission was taken as to the particular points that could be most advantageously recovered and most advantageously used after they were so recovered. And when the naval expeditions started out under Stringham and Du Pont for the capture of these places on the Atlantic coast, they started, sir, with a definite object to be accomplished, and that object was determined upon by the Secretary of the Navy after he had made use of all the means and all the resources at his command, including a commission of men specially versed in this department of his duty.

[Here the hammer fell.]

Mr. ASHLEY. I move that the gentleman be allowed to proceed.

There was no objection.

Mr. RICE, of Massachusetts. I have spoken, Mr. Chairman, very much longer than I anticipated when I arose, and I appreciate the kindness and courtesy of the House in allowing me an opportunity further to proceed; and I will endeavor to show my appreciation by not trespassing upon the patience of members further than may be absolutely necessary to present the case which I have in hand.

Now, sir, I was about to say that I would not go over a long and tedious recital of the number of boards which the Secretary of the Navy has from time to time summoned, that he might acquaint himself with their opinions, and, so far as he should determine, act in accordance with their advice. So far as that is concerned, he and the Department have had all the practical benefits of a board of admiralty without the loss of executive ability. And upon that one point of executive ability let me say that you may look over the annals of mankind, from the dawn of civilization to the present time, and you will find nowhere in the records of any nation so gigantic a performance in the way of constructing a navy in the same length of time as has been performed by the Navy Department of the United States.

Now, Mr. Chairman, it is well to say right here—because it is pertinent to the remarks made by the gentleman from Maryland—that not only has this Navy Department had its attention carefully fixed upon absorbing the resources of its navy yards and the private establishments of the country in the building of ships and ordnance and machinery, but it has also had closely at heart the grand result to which all naval warfare tends, or should tend, and that is, a victory; and in carrying out that idea it has not groped only among naval administrative reports of foreign countries; it has not blindly followed the lead of any nation; not merely imitated what the brains of some other man or some other people had devised, but taking the issues of the living present before it, and studying them, has addressed itself, whether by old means or by new means, at all events by successful means, to the accomplishment of the result to which, as I said before, all naval warfare should tend—victory.

And let me say here what is the distinctive American idea upon the subject—an idea differing entirely from the theories of either England, France, or any other nation on the face of the earth—and that is, in the first place, in respect to vessels, and in the second place in reference to ordnance; for, as has been well and justly said, since this war commenced the United States have reformed the whole system of naval warfare twice: first, in respect to the construction of ships; and secondly, in respect to the construction of ordnance. And that idea, the main idea, is this, to take away as far as possible in the construction of your ships the target to the enemy's guns; and in

the second place, in the construction of your ordnance to put the greatest weight of metal into the smallest possible compass: and, sir, whether for weal or for woe, whether in success or in defeat, that is the American idea which has been working out and which is now working out in the construction of the American Navy.

Why, everybody knows that the first change which took place in naval ships—I speak not now of the period since the war commenced—was to dispense with sails and to adopt steam as the motive power. But since this war commenced the idea has been not only to construct steam vessels, but to construct iron vessels also; and in constructing iron vessels, not to construct broadside vessels only, carrying a large number of guns and standing many feet out of water, but to put the vessels as low in the water as practicable, and to compress, as I said before, the weight of your ordnance-metal into the smallest possible compass. And if anybody desires a practical illustration of the wisdom and efficiency of this theory when carried out to practical results, let me carry his mind back to that memorable Saturday morning in March, 1862, when your frigates with their immense broadsides lay in Hampton roads waiting and watching there for anything which might come to them from the harbor of Norfolk. And what did come? Why, sir, the Merrimac, a great and powerful iron-clad, came down on Saturday and sent to the bottom of the ocean your frigate Cumberland and your frigate Congress with as apparent ease as you would crush an egg-shell in your hand. And, sir, nothing under heaven saved the rest of that fleet except the fact that they were in very shoal water where the Merrimac was not able to follow them.

And how did it happen that the Merrimac, when she came down the next morning, did not make a similar disposition of the remainder of the fleet? How did it happen that she did not come along the coast, and up the Potomac, shell this seat of Government, and lay this capital in ruins? Why did she not go to Baltimore, why not to Philadelphia, why not to New York, Boston, and other important commercial places on the sea-coast, and lay them under contribution, and capture or destroy their shipping and defences? Because on that Sunday morning the first practical development of this American idea of dispensing with a target for your enemy, and of concentrating the weight of your metal into the smallest possible compass, was made. The Merrimac came down just as confidently on Sunday morning as she had come down on Saturday: but, if I mistake not, and if history is not altogether at fault, she went back with an entirely different message to the southern confederacy on Sunday from that which she took back on Saturday. She met there, as the gentleman from Maryland has said, if not originally, yet felicitously, a raft with a cheese-box on it; and the result of that raft with a cheese-box on it, the result of that practical American idea, in which it differed from France and from England and

from the world, was that when she discharged her immense guns into the sides of the Merrimac, that vessel, gigantic as she was, found that she was entirely unable to cope with this diminutive, untried Yankee notion. This experiment, for it was nothing more nor less than an experiment then, this first practical embodiment of the American idea, sent the gigantic rebel monster, constructed more after the plans of France and England, skulking back into the harbor of Norfolk, from which she never came out afterward.

And so, also, wherever this American idea has been subsequently tested the same result has followed. How was it in the case of the Fingal, constructed on the Clyde, and sent over here as a blockade runner, one specimen of those vast contributions which our former friend and—if I speak not unadvisedly—our recent enemy, has made to the southern confederacy in the building and supply of ships and ordnance to enable the rebels to tear down the pillars of this Government and to destroy our national life? How was it in the case of the Fingal, which came over here under the guise of a merchant vessel, which was taken up to Savannah and there altered, at an expense of millions of dollars, into a rebel iron-clad? After she was completed she came out at the appointed time, commanded by one who had served under the old flag, and filled with officers who were ingloriously transferring not only their allegiance but their experience to the flag of our enemy, and accompanied by transports filled with gay people, who were coming out as on a festive occasion to witness the conflict between the Atlanta—which the Fingal had now become—and the Weehawken, commanded by that noble sailor and just and honest man, John Rodgers.

And what was the result of that trial between the combination of British and confederate skill and this American idea? Hardly had the Atlanta got into position before a fifteen-inch shot from the Weehawken struck against her side, prostrated forty men upon her decks, and scattered barrels of splinters, of wood and iron, as the first announcement to the officers of the Atlanta of how great an advance had been made by this theory of compressing the weight of your metal into the smallest possible compass. After that one shot was fired it was utterly impossible for the commander of the Atlanta to bring his men back again to their guns; and before the Nahant, the coöperating vessel of the Weehawken, was able to get into position and fire a single shot, the white flag appeared on the Atlanta and she became a prize—a prize to this American idea. And she now floats under the stars and stripes, and is doing good and efficient service, as I understand, in the American Navy. Almost every successful naval battle that has been fought has been fought partly with the use of those monitors. The honorable gentleman from Maryland has stated what he would have us believe to be the testimony of high officials in the naval service in condemnation of these monitors, and yet if he will read the testimony of these men candidly

and impartially he will find that they not only declare in their favor, but that they are unwilling to go into any great and important action without their assistance.

The gentleman from Maryland has referred to the magnificent and glorious achievements of Farragut in Mobile Bay. But does the honorable gentleman desire me to tell him that before Admiral Farragut made his movement in Mobile Bay he waited for iron-clads? and four of them did join his fleet before the action commenced, and I have here the testimony of Admiral Porter, if I could consume the time of the committee in reading from testimony, as the gentleman has done, but it is not worth while; whether it be on the Atlantic, or in the Gulf, or upon the Mississippi, the result is the same. For they have built iron-clads and iron vessels on the Mississippi and its tributaries as well as upon the Atlantic and in the Gulf, and everywhere they have turned out to be the most efficient and most powerful and the most formidable vessels ever constructed.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I shall be obliged, in the fulfilment of my promise not to weary the House more than is necessary, to pass over many important features of this discussion. I want to say next, that when the fight took place between the Merrimac and the Monitor at Hampton Roads, a high British authority declared that the naval force of England amounted to but three or four vessels. I cannot quote his language precisely; but it was substantially that the naval force of Great Britain was wiped out; that they must begin *de novo*; that they must cast aside their Warriors, their Agincourts, and all other like ships they had constructed, because the fight in Hampton Roads proved that the Monitor vessels, which presented no broadside to be perforated by the shot of the enemy, also carried a gun that would crush in the sides of the vessels built upon the English and the French plans. That demonstrated that the countless millions that they had expended under the wisdom and forecast of this Board of Admiralty was all for nothing.

We have to-day accomplished, in the construction of our naval vessels, the two things which the Government started out to accomplish when it entered upon this gigantic undertaking, so far as the theory of the construction of vessels is concerned. In the first place they desired to devise a vessel that would carry an armor which the ordnance of no foreign nation could shoot through, and then to place upon these ships guns throwing a weight of metal which, if it would not perforate, would crush in the sides of any ship belonging to any other nation. And I say here, without the fear of contradiction, that that result has been accomplished, and that we to-day have vessels whose armor is a complete protection against the guns of any nation on the face of the earth, and that we also have on those vessels, on the Monitor vessels, guns that will drive from the ocean any vessel that may come in conflict with our ships.

Now, sir, I think that fact is not new on the

other side of the water, if it is new here. That fact is not new in France and in England, if it be new in the United States. That fact is probably not new in the Parliament of Great Britain or in the Chamber of Deputies of France, if it be new in the Congress of the United States. Let me say to you, that those Governments are to-day studying the monitor system of the United States with the most careful and anxious solicitude, to see by what means they may be able, if by any means whatever, to put themselves on an equality with the gigantic, and at present all but, if it be not altogether, irresistible naval power of the United States. Why, sir, is it a matter that need be told here, that the Governments of several foreign nations have sent special commissions here since the fight took place between the Monitor and the Merrimac, and the Weehawken and Atlanta, to study out, if it may be, this wonderful power that has been improvised amid the excitements and necessities of a gigantic and unexampled war? And besides that, every item of information which goes out from us in respect to this conflict to France and Great Britain, with whom we are in the closest communication, is sought for and maturely studied. Have gentlemen forgotten that Sweden has sent her officers here to specially study this system? And have you forgotten that the Imperial Government of Russia sent a fleet over here, bringing some of her most accomplished officers, that they might acquaint themselves with the nature and character and probable results of these wonderful, improvised systems and implements of American naval warfare? Nor, sir, need I remind you or the honorable gentleman from Maryland that the Imperial Government of Russia, sitting apart at the head of the eastern continent, overlooking it and ourselves, studying, watching, observing closely and anxiously the naval progress of all the naval Powers of the world—that the Russian Government, immediately after learning of the trial of one of these monitor vessels, ordered thirteen of them constructed to take their places as an efficient part of the Russian navy. And, sir, if need be, let me inform the gentleman from Maryland and everybody else, that for such results it was that the naval officers of that great Power came by the boards of admiralty of Great Britain and by the better naval organization of France, over here, across the Baltic and across the Atlantic Ocean, to study here, upon American soil and in American waters, the nature and character of American ships and of American ordnance, and the ways and means by which such gigantic results have been produced in so short a period of time.

Sir, the honorable gentleman from Maryland directed his animadversions also against another class of vessels, the double-enders, or ferry-boats, as he was pleased to term them, but which everybody else recognizes as gun-boats, constructed to meet the new exigencies which had arisen in the progress of this war. Everybody knows that this war has been mainly a defensive war—so far as foreign nations have been concerned, entirely so. It is known also

that it has been necessary, in the prosecution of the war by the navy, that there should be classes of vessels suited to a great variety of purposes and uses, and among others that vessels especially were wanted that should be able to move into the rivers, and into the shallow harbors of the southern coast. It is known also that when a vessel gets up into a river it takes a great deal of time to turn about, and that there are exigencies that would prevent its turning about, and all means of escape be consequently cut off. Hence it was that these vessels were constructed with double bows, in order that rather than wait perhaps under the fire of an enemy the time necessary to turn, or rather than be placed perhaps in a position where they could not turn, they might be able to retire without delay, and without molestation. And those vessels have been among the most successful ships of the navy.

Sir, it was told us some time ago, just as the gentleman has told us this morning, that the Dictator will not run over six knots an hour; it was told us that there was not a new vessel in the navy that would make more than six or seven knots an hour. Well, sir, when the Committee on Naval Affairs undertook the investigation instituted by the resolution of the honorable gentleman from Maryland, there were two naval vessels frozen in by the ice at the Washington yard. By direction of the committee, I immediately notified the Secretary of the Navy that the Committee on Naval Affairs would require one or both of those vessels before they should leave the Potomac River, in order that a practical test of their speed might be made. I learned on inquiry that those vessels were the *Sassacus* and the *Eutaw*, two of this very lot of forty-seven double-enders to which the honorable gentleman from Maryland has alluded. Finding that they were duplicates of each other, and that it was useless to try the same thing over twice, I said to the Secretary that it would answer the purpose of the committee to try one of those vessels. Said he, "Which will you have?" Speaking entirely at random, for I knew nothing whatever of the vessels, I chanced to say, "We will take the *Eutaw*." And, sir, we took that vessel. I then said to the Navy Department that the committee would wish to have upon this vessel during this trip, some practical engineer who is independent of the Navy Department, and beyond the scope of its influence, and who would be competent to watch all the manipulations of the ship, the performance of her machinery in every particular, and able to report to the committee fairly and intelligibly concerning her performance. The services of an experienced practical engineer from the city of New York were secured, a gentleman who had constructed a vessel with which it was said no vessel of the navy could successfully compete in speed. He accompanied the Committee on Naval Affairs, and other gentlemen on that trial trip of the *Eutaw* down the Potomac River. Further than that, the committee were determined that the test should be made with such accuracy and such

guarantees that the result should be beyond mistake; and we sent to the Coast Survey, asking the head of that department to detail officers with the proper charts and instruments to enable them to determine the distances run and the speed made from point to point. With that engineer to inspect the performance of the vessel, and with those officers of the Coast Survey to mark the distances and note the time, that experiment was made, and I have submitted to this House the official reports of those gentlemen upon that subject. They state that a vessel that could do nothing—that vessel was a "failure," as forty-six others are, according to the honorable gentleman from Maryland—made a speed of  $13\frac{7}{10}$  knots an hour, equal to sixteen miles per hour. I have no reason to believe that her speed was greater than that of many others belonging to her class. There is the practical test made by a committee of this Congress, a committee of this House, appointed by its authority, and acting in obedience to its instructions. That is the result testified to by an accomplished engineer having no connection whatever with the Navy Department, and an officer who belongs to the Coast Survey office, and, so far as I know, having no partialities and no ends to subserve elsewhere.

Now, sir, I do not think it necessary for me to pursue and answer, in tedious detail, all the complaints made, whether in Congress or out of Congress, by men who, instead of elevating their minds to the consideration of the gigantic and successful achievements of the Navy and the best means of sustaining them, muse only in dissatisfaction, seeking for those things alone which they may visit with hostile criticism. Suffice it to say that during the progress of the investigation and in obedience to the instructions of this House in respect to these ships, and especially in respect to the machinery of those ships upon which the honorable gentleman has dilated, the committee spared neither time nor labor in examining every witness who was summoned before us. Some of them were before us two or three weeks, and the committee sat and heard their statements, and I hazard nothing in saying that a more triumphant vindication of any man or any Department was never made than is made by the testimony and the evidence gathered under that investigation. Such is the opinion of the committee.

The honorable gentleman from Maryland would have us believe that there have been great and important changes made in the construction of the vessels and machinery of our Navy. I have already said something of the differences in the construction of the vessels. I have also intimated the difference which has taken place in the construction of ordnance, so that instead of scattering guns all around the side of a vessel, we compress the equivalent into ten, fifteen and twenty-inch guns. And if the gentleman wants to know something else besides what he has mentioned which cannot be found anywhere else except in the United States, I can tell him two things which he can-

not find elsewhere, and those are the fifteen and the twenty-inch guns. I can tell him that that fifteen-inch gun and that twenty-inch gun, which he cannot find anywhere else, is precisely the instrument and the only instrument on the face of this earth which will shoot through or crush in the sides of any naval vessel not sailing under the flag of the United States. And they can only be floated on the monitor, for the reason that in building a broadside vessel two or three hundred feet in length, and standing anywhere from twelve to fifteen feet out of water, in order to put upon her side a sufficient weight of metal to render her impervious to shot, you would get on so much weight as to send her to the bottom; whereas, in the monitor vessel there is but little length compared with this broadside vessel, and instead of standing many feet out of water, she only stands a few inches out of water. Therefore, while the English cannot put upon their broadside vessels more than from four and a half to six inches of iron, through which we can shoot and crush their sides, we are able to support twelve and fourteen inches of iron upon so much of the sides of the monitor as are exposed to the shots of the enemy. And then our great guns are not distributed upon the broadside or deck of the vessel of the monitors, but are put into turrets twenty or more feet in diameter, the sides of which are protected by twelve or eighteen inches of iron, which cannot be shot through by any ordnance yet constructed.

And while upon this topic let me say a single word in regard to these monitors which the gentleman from Maryland has criticized so severely, saying that they would "dictate" to nothing except at the bottom of the ocean. Would it be very marvellous, if in the excitement and under the tremendous pressure of this war, the Navy Department, or the engineers of the country, should sometimes make a mistake?

Where is the man who has angelic wisdom, who goes to the fountain of all knowledge and dips out of its plenitude that measure which shall guaranty him against the common accidents and the common fallibilities of human nature? Tell me where the man is, what his name is, and then I shall perhaps be able to cite to you a man who can undertake a great and gigantic and untried experiment, prosecuted under unparalleled difficulties, and find no possibility for improvement on his first effort.

Now, sir, it is no extraordinary thing for a vessel to have a greater draught of water than she was designed to have. It is no extraordinary thing, as I am told, in vessels, whether they be built for the Navy or the commercial marine, that there should be some slight variation from the calculations in that respect. Is that such an unpardonable sin, then, as to call for the arraignment of a Department of this Government, as that it should be held up for censure here in the Congress of the United States before the people of the country and before the people of the world—some of them already sufficiently hostile to us and to our

purposes? Is it so great a crime that the Navy Department, or those acting for it, should on one occasion or more, have made a small miscalculation of draught of water in the construction of a new and untried class of vessels?

But what does this error amount to? Why, it amounts to this, that these monitor vessels, which were designed to draw some six or seven feet of water, drew, if I recollect aright, some twelve or fifteen inches more than they were designed to draw. That fact was discovered when the first of these vessels was launched, and in season for the correction of the error in all but five; these five were taken for special use as torpedo boats. If they had not been applied to that use vessels would have had to be constructed for that purpose. What is the real importance of the mistake in constructing these vessels? It is not that they are ruined. It is that they must have on their sides one or two more courses of iron, just precisely as if a man were building a house one and a half story high, and should find when he got it along tolerably well toward completion that it would be more convenient and better suited and perhaps necessary to his purpose if he were to raise the roof a little higher and make it a complete two-story house. That is the sum of the matter. A few courses of iron have been added to the sides of these vessels, carrying their decks up higher, increasing their tonnage very materially, and involving an increased cost of about eighty-four thousand dollars apiece. That, sir, is what the mistake of these light-draught monitors amounts to.

And now, Mr. Chairman, to bring these remarks to a close, although I have by no means exhausted the subject, I desire to call the attention of the committee to the fact that, in the long investigation which the Naval Committee had in reference to the construction of the engines and the boilers and the condensers and the valve gear in this naval machinery, they were found to be in accordance, for the most part, with the best authorities, with the best testimony; not only up to but surpassing the vessels which had been previously built in the Navy, so far as they were tested by their speed. And that is one way, I take it, in which we are to bring this question of ships and of machinery in ships to a practical test. I say here, as the result of investigation, that there is an increase of speed in the vessels built since over those built before the accession of the present Administration. Not only that, but I say that the vessels yet completed and put into service are not, according to this investigation, the vessels that have been built for the special accomplishment of speed; and I hazard nothing in saying that when those being built with that object are put into service, we will probably have the fastest as well as the most formidable defensive navy in the world.

Now it seems to me to be a very strange time and a very singular selection of opportunity, after our experience in this war, to summon up here to the judgment of the country, for condemnation and censure by Congress and the

country, the Navy Department of the United States. Why, sir, from the very dawn of this rebellion the Navy has been in efficient service. It has been created from four ships up to six hundred and seventy-one ships. The gentleman from Maryland [Mr. DAVIS] has called the attention of the House to the vast expenditure of money, the wasteful squandering of large sums, upon what he characterizes as useless and unavailable ships of the Navy. Sir, let me tell you that according to British authority this American Navy has been created, has been put afloat and armed, and the Department carried on at an expense of less by \$5,000,000 than it cost Great Britain to maintain her fleet during the same period of time, though she has been at peace. These two examples illustrate the practical working of our system and theirs. The British Navy is conducted by a Board of Admiralty whose defects are sufficiently described by their own people as attended by delays, divided councils, and the lack of economy and of executive power. It results from the fact that they are following old examples, and England regards what France does, and France regards what England does; whereas we have a navy organization that is vitalized, that is responsible, that acts upon the spur of the moment; and because it is able to seize the earliest opportunities and the best facilities for supplying its wants, may be always ready to meet exigencies and perils as they arise. And I think I hazard nothing in saying, in the presence of the facts, that there are claims now before the Naval Committee, from the manufacturers of the machinery of our Navy, asking for remuneration in the sum of millions of dollars which they have lost, because the bargains of the Navy Department were made so close, were so nicely scrutinized, that they have not been able under the exigencies of the war to do the work they contracted for at the estimated cost. Here we are to-day called upon virtually to pass a vote of censure upon the Navy Department, and to put it under the surveillance of an independent legalized board, in the presence of all that it has accomplished, whether it be in the construction of ships or in the achievement of victories.

Why, sir, as I have already said, from the dawn of the rebellion until now the Navy has

been everywhere that it could be, and always has done glorious and efficient service. The Mississippi and its tributaries are open to commerce again; every port for blockade runners upon the Atlantic and the Gulf has been closed; all the strongholds seized by the enemy upon the coast have been recovered, and nearly every corsair driven from the ocean. The Navy was at Hatteras, at Port Royal, at Charleston, at Island No. 10, at Fort Donelson, at Fort Henry, at Shiloh, at Memphis, at Vicksburg, at Arkansas Post, at Port Hudson, at Mobile Bay, and at Fort Fisher. And in all those places it added radiance to the American name, and glory to the American naval history, which no lapse of time shall be enabled to obliterate. It has placed upon the imperishable record of fame, to be transmitted amid the plaudits of mankind to the latest generations, such names as Stringham, and Foote, and Du Pont, and Farragut, and Goldsborough, and Porter, and Dahlgren, and Rodgers, and Rowan, and Davis, and Winslow, and Cushing; and I should consume the day if I attempted to name them all. Their reputation is secure in history; it is secure in the hearts of their countrymen; and when the final history of this war shall be written out, and the comparison shall be made of the manner in which the different Departments of this Government have executed the high and laborious and responsible trusts committed to them, faithful and earnest as they have been, there will not be one of them that will stand brighter, or that will be more loudly or warmly commended by our successors, than will the Navy Department. And, sir, I cannot think that the well-earned fame of the naval service, this just meed of praise, will be diminished or obscured by any gentleman, however lofty his standing or however brilliant his abilities, who asks you, in the light of these facts, to put over your Navy Department a board of administration which shall be a change without improvement, or who cites to you the fact that, in the accomplishment of the gigantic labors that have fallen to the lot of that Department, it made a mistake in regard to the draught of a monitor, or an alleged but not admitted mistake in the construction of a double-ender.

## SPEECH OF HON. F. A. PIKE, OF MAINE.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*February 4, 1865.*

The House having resumed the consideration of the bill making appropriations for the naval service for the year ending the 30th of June, 1866, and the amendments thereto—

Mr. PIKE said:—

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The gentleman from Maryland [Mr. DAVIS] asked yesterday why the

Naval Committee had not at least reported the proposition which he had submitted to it. He said, and correctly, that he applied to members of that committee to have a report, whether it were in favor of or opposed to his proposition. If the gentleman means to treat the Naval Committee fairly, he should have stated further that that committee took up that measure at once.

I was one of the persons to whom he applied, and the day after his application to me that measure was taken up in the Naval Committee. It was there discussed and put in train for report; but from that day to this there has been no opportunity when, under the rules of the House, that committee could make a report. And that was the reason, and the sole reason, why the report has not been made. The gentleman from Maryland had not the slightest reason to accuse the Naval Committee of an intention to smother his bill.

The gentleman further said that the Naval Committee, in their action on his bill, reflected the views of the Navy Department, as if the only desire of that committee was to register the decrees of that Department. I suppose the gentleman would not make that statement unless he had some evidence to sustain it; but for myself, as a member of that committee, while I am far from considering it a crime to act in conjunction with that Department on this or any other measure, I have never had any conversation with the Secretary or the Assistant Secretary of the Navy upon the subject, and I do not know to-day whether they are in favor of or opposed to this bill. I do not know how it may be with the other members of that committee in reference to the opinions they hold on the subject; but I have no doubt that they have acted with equal independence of the Navy Department. And as to the gentleman from Maryland, I do not know what his relations are with the Navy Department, further than from the indication he gave yesterday and last session I was led to suppose that they are unfriendly. I say, with all respect to him, that I neither know nor care whether he is friendly or unfriendly to the gentleman at the head of the Navy Department.

Mr. DAVIS, of Maryland. The gentleman does not mean to make, of course, reference to my relations with the Navy Department.

Mr. PIKE. I have said that I know nothing about them except what he stated in his place here. He said further, by way of illustration, that the Naval Committee had spent a large portion of their time—so I understood him—at the last session running around the country to find a location for a navy-yard, and that that matter had better be committed to professional hands; which is doubtless true. But let me state that I, sir, as a member of that committee, took part in that examination, or most of it; and I will say to the gentleman and to the House that, although I did attend the committee on a trip to look at a site for a navy-yard, and came back with that committee, I was absent during the whole of the last session only one single sitting of the House upon the business of searching for a site for a navy-yard.

Such allegations, sir, by the distinguished gentleman from Maryland seemed to me to call for a reply; for a gentleman who can be so careless in his statement of facts about his associate members upon this floor, can hardly expect that his statement upon other and more important matters shall be implicitly relied upon.

But all these matters are personal and unim-

portant. The gentleman from Maryland propounded a grave question to this House, and that was, "Have we a Navy?"—a question not to be answered by eloquence nor by brilliant declamation. If it were, I should decline to interpose my rude speech. But, sir, a ship-of-war is, as Mr. Carlyle says, a "great fact." Ay, sir, a perfect ship-of-war is a great fact which has been sought for by all maritime nations for centuries; and it is because it rests among facts and not among theories, that I propose to discuss briefly the important question he has propounded.

The gentleman says that not only have we no considerable Navy, but we have no organization by which that result can be brought about. That is a statement of fact, which, if true, in view of the not improbable contingencies of a foreign war, it is well for this House now and here to discuss, in order to ascertain whether the allegation be correct.

It is a preliminary question whether or not there is an organization that in the future can produce a respectable Navy. The gentleman from Maryland has produced his plan. Here it is: a board of naval administration which is to be a panacea for all the ills under which we now suffer. I hold in my hand the original measure, but which I understand has been modified somewhat since. It provides that the vice-admiral and four other officers of the Navy shall constitute a board, and that that board shall have the advising of the construction and management of the Navy.

It is proposed to make this board permanent, for the smaller experiments which have been tried from time to time in the Navy Department, and which is an ordinary and almost daily means of obtaining the opinion of an advisory board, will not satisfy the gentleman. He must have this a permanent board, under the appointment of the President and sanction of the Senate. So he would retire our distinguished vice-admiral from active service, and take him and four or five other distinguished officers of the Navy and lay them up in ordinary here, imposing upon them simply the duty of advising the Secretary of the Navy, which advice he may or may not be expected, in his discretion, to follow. In addition to the serious objection of retiring so many good officers, we can readily imagine the conflicting views which will arise, the discordant councils, and the balancing and shifting of responsibility from the head of the Navy Department to the naval board, and back again from the naval board to the Secretary of the Navy. Either one or the other of them must be responsible. It will not be as it is now, where you have provided your Secretary of the Navy with heads of bureaus who shall advise him of all the details of their particular departments. If the Secretary desires to contract for a ship he goes to the head of the Bureau of Construction, of whom Admiral Du Pont said, "The nation is largely indebted to him for his valuable services in constructing our best vessels, and under any other form of government he would long ago have been knighted."

If the Secretary wishes to contract for the construction of an engine, he applies to the head of the bureau whose special duty it is to attend to that particular thing. If he wants to act in other directions, he inquires of the admirals and other experienced and able officers who are at the head of the other bureaus, and taking their advice singly and collectively, as he does from time to time, he makes up his opinion and acts accordingly. Thus you have the principle of individual and strict responsibility, and at the same time have all the benefit of consultation and advice which could possibly be obtained from an advisory board of the character proposed.

It is asked now that we shall change all this; and why? Why, because other maritime nations have done so. We should call in a Board of Admiralty because England has had a Board of Admiralty, and the gentleman from Maryland has copied his plan partially from that of England and partly from that of France.

Well, sir, the Board of Admiralty at the time of its creation in England was progress and reform. Bad as it is it was better than its predecessor. It succeeded the Lord High Admiral. He was a prince of the blood. The office was held by a natural son of Henry VIII when he was but eight years of age, and afterwards by various branches of the dull family who at present occupy the British throne.

Sir, it was progress and reform to take the management of the navy out of such hands, and place it under the control of the British Board of Admiralty. These reforms do occasionally occur in Great Britain. But one considerable reform satisfies that moderate people for a century; and this organization is nearly two centuries old, and it is time, as it is worn out, corrupt, and effete, that it should give place to a modern organization that shall free itself from existing errors, and answer the purposes of the present generation.

Sir, I cannot say, as my distinguished friend from Massachusetts [Mr. Rice] said yesterday, that I have no prejudices upon this subject. I am frank to confess that I have prejudices, and of two systems equally good, the one our American system, and the other an English system, I confess that my prejudices would lead me always to select the American system. But, sir, I do not wish to depend upon prejudices. I wish to produce here authority for what I say about the British Admiralty. I took occasion the other day when this subject came up to go into the Library, and found there only three books upon this subject, and I examined them to see what intelligent British criticism had to say about this Board of Admiralty. I do not propose to cite from those authorities at length; but I invoke the attention of the House to some brief extracts. And the first is a book published in London about four years ago, entitled Admiralty Administration, by a very intelligent author, who, if I mistake not, is a distinguished naval officer. He says of this Board of Admiralty:

"It is most important to remember that this distribution of business is an internal arrange-

ment by which the board delegates to its several members a portion of its own duties; that each member is responsible to the board, and to the board alone, for his performance of those duties; and that for each and all of those duties the responsibility upon Parliament and the country is that not of the individual lord, but of the board in its collective capacity."

That is precisely applicable to this bill. Well, what was the effect? This writer describes the effect; he says:

"It is unnecessary to insist at any length on the evil of divided councils, which must often occur among six persons brought together by the chapter of accidents, without previous knowledge of each other's views, and in fact the Admiralty often represents nothing so completely as the endless diversity of opinions which prevail among naval officers; a diversity which on the other hand is partly accounted for by the absence of any standard course of policy to be discovered in the conduct of successive naval administrations."

And he winds up by saying:

"With respect to naval officers the case is not more encouraging, for the only one subject on which there is general agreement among them is the utter hopelessness of any good result arising from a system which is felt to hang like a blight over the navy."

Now, sir, I hold in my hand a series of letters written by a distinguished British admiral, Sir Charles Napier, in which he describes this system, having served under it for a long period. Let us see what he says about it. He says:

"I have been forty-one years in the service; and with the exception of commanders of sloops, first lieutenants, senior midshipmen of ships of the line and frigates, being promoted in consequence of the capture of a superior or equal force, I have seldom observed anything like common justice in the distribution of promotion. First lieutenants might be the best and most zealous officers in the service—that was seldom a sufficient recommendation for promotion."

Again, sir, he says:

"What Sir George Cockburn, Sir George Clark, and I believe Sir Byam Martin foretold, has come to pass. There is no responsibility whatever, for the responsibility of six gentlemen composing the Board of Admiralty is not worth a straw. May I ask your lordship who is responsible for the millions of money thrown away in building an inefficient steam navy; who is responsible for the iron steam fleet that the Admiralty do not know what to do with? It was only the other day that, raising a tank and the dunnage under it, in one of these precious vessels, they found a hole in her bottom through which the water passed, and a fish in it, on which, if I am not mistaken, one of their lordships breakfasted."

And again:

"Believing, as I do, that no permanent good can be done for the service until the Board of Admiralty is abolished, I shall point out what appears to me would be the best mode of ruling the navy, although that step has not been taken."

And that mode, sir, was to have one head of the navy, on whom the undivided responsibility of its management should rest.

So much for Sir Charles Napier. I now read from another book entitled Our Naval

Position and Policy, written also by a naval officer, and published in London in 1859; and this is what he says upon the subject. He quotes from Sir George Cockburn, and approves the sentiment:

"Having filled the station of confidential or principal Sea Lord of the Admiralty for more than seventeen years, I feel that my opinion regarding the constitution of the board may sooner or later be deemed worthy of consideration and attention. I am induced, therefore, to place in writing the decisions to which my experience has brought me on this point.

"I have no hesitation in stating that I consider the present establishment of that board to be the most unsatisfactory and least efficient for its purpose that could have been devised."

So much for the authority of intelligent British criticism upon the Admiralty Board of England.

Suppose, now, that you examine that Board in the light of their accomplishments. What did the board do when the great transition came from sailing vessels to steam? It was tried, as our present Navy has been tried, by war. They had the Crimean war, in which England and France combined, and the universal opinion of naval writers was that the naval administration of Great Britain was a failure. The Admiralty Board only covered themselves with ridicule by building a hundred and fifty extra and useless gunboats and parading them before the public after the war was over, to show that there was still some life left in the old board.

And how was it, sir, with regard to the iron-clads, the second transition period of the Navy? They had long years the start of us. Twenty odd years ago we began one single battery, and there we stopped with it still on the stocks in New Jersey. We saw no need of any further efforts in that direction, and made none. But England and France both began to arm themselves in this new mode of naval warfare, and what was the result? I do not call upon my prejudices for an answer. I have it here from British authority. I will ask the Clerk to read an extract from one of the best naval mechanical magazines in Great Britain, the London Mechanics' Magazine

The clerk read, as follows:

"The event foreshadowed in the Mechanics' Magazine, more than two years since, is close at hand. The fleet of experimental iron-clads, of which the Warrior is the type, must, if they are to be in a condition to cope with the armor-plated ships of foreign Powers, be reconstructed. What a bitter sarcasm is this announcement on Admiralty management! The Warrior has been held up to the admiration of the naval world as the most perfect specimen of a screw iron-clad frigate. Quite recently, it was represented, on Whitehall authority, that 'her excellent sea-going qualities and rate of speed under steam were unrivalled,' and she was 'just in such splendid order in all her internal arrangements as can only be attained by unremitting exertions at the close of an ordinary term of commission.' It seems incredible that this magnificent vessel, which, we are told, the Admiralty officials 'feel a just pride in calling the finest and fastest of her Majesty's iron-clad

fleet,' is suddenly discovered to be utterly defenceless as a ship-of-war.

"We were prepared for this discovery. While she was still under construction we pointed out that the unprotected condition of her bows and stern would be fatal to her in action, as it would enable a completely armored antagonist to make a wreck of her two ends, and in her crippled state leave her no choice but destruction or surrender. Representations to that effect were urged on the notice of the admiralty, but disregarded with sublime indifference by 'my lords' and their noble secretary. Remonstrance was in vain; the square fighting-box, occupying two hundred feet in length of the centre of the ship, was a capital invention. The batteries and the gunners were safe in this iron fortress; the arrangement was perfection, nothing could be better. The comptroller and his staff were jubilant; they treated with disdain the sinister predictions of professional and civilian critics, and, not content with one experimental iron-clad on the fighting-box system, costing nearly half a million, they induced the Admiralty to order three others on the same principle. Four ships, at a cost of nearly a million and a half, were built on an untried plan, and now, after their completion, by a trial, which might and ought to have been made long before the first of the number was ready for sea, it is discovered that the objectors, whose opinions were treated with scorn, are right, and the plan is a failure.

"The recent shell practice against the target-ship Alfred, at Portsmouth, has suddenly opened the eyes of the 'lords' who witnessed it to the unpleasant fact that a Warrior with her bows and stern unprotected by iron armor would be no match for a Gloire, much less for a Couronne or a Magenta.

"A panic has seized the comptroller of the navy and his chief constructor, and spread to the board. The fear of Parliament is before their eyes. Hastily, 'the Warrior is to be paid out of commission, and is ordered to be thoroughly dismantled, everything being returned to store, and her machinery taken to pieces.' Three reasons are spoken of as having influenced the Admiralty in paying her out of commission: 'First, want of men for the three-decker Victoria; secondly, the defective condition of the ship's boilers; and, thirdly, the intended alterations and continuation of the armor-plating around the bows and stern.' The two first reasons are mere pretexts—the last is the true one. At length the murder is out. The famous Warrior, the splendid iron-clad, cannot meet an enemy without being doomed to destruction and without disgracing England's flag. The remedy is a bitter pill for the Government to swallow; but there is no avoiding it. *The Warrior must be reconstructed;* and this will commence the reconstruction of our entire iron-clad navy. The Warrior or elastic system of armor plating—iron on wood backing—which, with slight modification, is adopted for every plated ship, as we have frequently shown, is defective in principle, and must be replaced by a system of greater rigidity. The expense will be enormous, but it is unavoidable.

"The intended alteration to the Warrior's bow and stern will necessitate the opening and lengthening of the ship's frame forward and aft, otherwise she would be unable to carry the additional armor-plating, and would be ruined in her present excellent sea-going qualities and speed. In plain words, it is found necessary to cut the Warrior into three parts, and reunite them by splicing (to use a familiar term) at both ends. This work will necessitate the removal of the armor-plates

and backing at the two extremities of the ship, the reconstruction and replating of the latter, and probably alterations in the masting and rigging. These changes will involve great expense, and may be seriously prejudicial to the trim of the vessel. Three other iron-clads on the same plan will have to be reconstructed.

"But worse still remains to be told. What is to be done with Mr. Reed's fleet of wooden bottoms and unprotected ends, carrying square iron fighting-boxes on the Warrior plan, but with such instability of structure that the iron top sides vibrate alarmingly from the fire of the ship's guns, with armor that will hardly resist 68-pounders at short ranges, and with the hamper of movable bulkheads on deck? If the formidable Warrior cannot encounter an enemy without being reconstructed, what is to become of the ships of the Research and Enterprise class, of which eight were built or laid on the stocks before one was tried? They have neither strength nor speed, are neither liners nor cruisers, and cannot by any process of reconstruction be converted into serviceable craft. With these prospects before us, the condition of the navy is by no means satisfactory."

MR. PIKE. Such, Mr. Chairman, is the naval administration of Great Britain in theory, and such when tried in practice. Is there anything in it, in theory or in accomplishment, that should induce us to copy from it? Shall this young and thrifty nation take a graft from that old and worn-out tree for the purpose of improving the fruit that we should produce?

But the system now proposed to be introduced partakes not only of the characteristics of the English Board of Admiralty, but it partakes also of those of the French board, and the authority of the French board is cited here to influence this House in its action. Sir, the French board is about thirty years old. It was adopted on the recommendation of a committee of the French parliament. It has been changed, and it has brought about a result which has alarmed Great Britain. But has it done anything as yet in time of actual war? La Normandie rolled and tumbled across the ocean to Vera Cruz, and after straining and leaking, to the great joy of everybody on board got back to France. Besides this feat, what else has France done? And of what use is it to talk about the organization of the French board? I hold in my hand an English book devoted to the subject of naval administration, in which the adoption, in part, of the French board is advocated. But after discussing the subject, the writer says frankly:

"But it is to be borne in mind that, though a change in the constitution of the French Admiralty did much, there is also much due to the peculiar talents and character of Napoleon III. We might possibly import the whole French system (as we always want to export our talkamatory Government) and be like the wise man who bought all Punch's show but forgot to buy the man inside."

As to the French board and the whole French navy, as Louis the Grand said of the State, so may Louis Napoleon say of the navy: "*La marine—c'est moi.*" And unless we propose to introduce him too, I see no reason why we should

copy from the French system. France has never yet been a first-class maritime country. She has but a million tons of shipping against some five or six millions of English tonnage, and about an equal amount of American tonnage; but she has accomplished a formidable navy, considered in the light of an attack on Great Britain. The great question between those two Powers is the possession of the English Channel. That raises the fears and quickens the exertions of one side or the other. No blow is struck at Cherbourg without thinking of Portsmouth, and no bolt is driven at Portsmouth without thinking of Cherbourg.

Such, Mr. Chairman, are the systems abroad. Is there anything in them, or in either of them, or in their performances, that should induce this House to copy them?

And now we come to our own system. Let us see what it has done, and whether it is worthy of the general condemnation pronounced upon it. We have tried heretofore copies of foreign systems, and they have failed. We have had our "Maritime Committee," our "Continental Navy Board," our "Board of Admiralty," our "Board of Naval Commissioners;" we tried the last thoroughly for twenty-seven years; and by universal assent they were all given up for the present system, which has been in operation since the year 1842 or 1843.

Now, sir, it is well to test the system in the two ways I have indicated: first, by its theory, of which I have spoken; and, secondly, by the results it has produced. The gentleman from Maryland [Mr. DAVIS] has tried it by its results. That is a fair way of trying it. And now let us see what our naval administration has done in the present war. What was the first necessity in 1861 when the war broke out? It was necessary to have a blockade, and as a first step it was necessary to have ships-of-war to carry out that blockade. It was the blockade of a coast of three thousand five hundred miles in extent; and Lord Lyons inquired of Mr. Seward with incredulity whether he really was in earnest in proposing to blockade a coast of that extent. Sir, it was a great undertaking. And I submit that the Navy Department, when tried by this test, fulfilled its purposes. That blockade has been strictly enforced according to the latest decisions upon the subject; it has been effectual. It has been tried by the opinion of foreign Powers, and has been pronounced by them to be an effectual blockade; and the result upon the confederacy, the result upon prices abroad, and the result upon prices here at home, show that it has been effectual; and I have no doubt the suffering English owner of many a captured blockade runner has unwillingly confessed to himself that the blockade was really strictly enforced. In order to accomplish this, it was necessary that the commercial marine of the country should be called upon, and vessels were purchased for that purpose. Hence comes the large list of purchased vessels upon which the gentleman from Maryland commented yesterday.

What was the next necessity? That the

Navy should assist the Army in reducing the southern forts. Has not that been accomplished? What is the list of Naval efforts but an almost constant succession of victories? With the almost single exception of the unfortunate attack upon Charleston, the flag has been triumphant everywhere. What more could have been done under any naval administration? Why, sir, in the last affair at Fort Fisher the concentrated fire from that whole fleet produced a result which is described in the rebel newspapers as a shower of shot and shell such as has never been equalled since the invention of gunpowder. And I may add an important fact, which has not been generally considered, that all of the guns upon the sea-face of that fort were dismantled by the fire from the navy; that not one of them at the time of the attack of the land forces remained in position; there was but a single howitzer that could act offensively upon the land forces when they made the attack.

And, sir, in addition to this, we have furnished cruisers which have perambulated the sea, and have rescued our commerce from the grasp of the British pirates. Sir, in these important respects your naval administration has been a decided success. Does anybody suppose that the slow-moving discussions of an aristocratic and conceited board of admiralty would have resulted as well?

But, sir, it is complained that, notwithstanding the naval administration has been a success in these particulars, it has failed in want of preparation for a foreign war. If this were so it would not be wonderful. Suppose it to be true that the gunboats that have been used to patrol the western waters for a length of three thousand five hundred miles are unfit to go to sea, is that anything remarkable? Suppose it to be true that the double-enders, which have been used for the shallow rivers and narrow inlets of the South, are exposed in their machinery on account of their light draught of water, is that anything to be surprised at? Was not the expenditure upon them made for a temporary purpose, and should the money have been reserved and taken away from a present and pressing necessity, to be applied to a future and possible contingency? Would that have been wise? Why, sir, I hardly think that even the British Board of Admiralty would have committed so stupid a blunder. Sir, the first great duty was to aid in the suppression of the rebellion; the next duty was to prepare for the possible contingency of foreign war. Well, sir, suppose that we are to have the foreign war, which many suppose will follow the suppression of the rebellion; suppose that, upon the suppression of the rebellion, Great Britain refuses to accede to our just demands, and a foreign war is brought on, and is hard pressing upon us, what is our first necessity? I submit to gentlemen of this House, what is the first necessity in case of such foreign war? Why, sir, it is the same necessity that has been felt in England for the last century: it is to defend your own ports.

Now, I ask whether or not the system of naval administration in this country has not

provided for that defence? Speak as you may of the monitor system: denounce it as you may as a sea-going system; speak of it as you may as a system of attack; speak of it as the gentleman from Maryland did yesterday when he said that between the discharges of the guns at Fort McAllister the rebel officers appeared upon the parapets and smoked their cigars; say that the system is slow for that purpose; that these long intervals between the discharges destroy the efficiency of the attack; that you need a rapid, a concentrated, and an overwhelming fire for the purpose of disabling a garrison; but do these objections apply to the monitor system as adapted to repelling an attack? Take these forty-seven monitors which are now completed, or in rapid progress toward completion, and tell me, would not Boston feel safer, and New York feel safer, and Baltimore feel safer, if they had each half a dozen of these vessels within their respective harbors at the time of the declaration of a foreign war? Why, sir, you need only look back to see the applications from various ports and from the authorities of various cities for these iron-clads for the purpose of defence when a war did threaten abroad, and when it was even supposed that some of the rebel cruisers might visit our northern harbors—from these earnest applications you learn the intelligent opinion of the country.

And let me say two things in reference to the monitor system, which answer all the charges made against it. There are two things which have already passed into the history of the country; and which, if the whole system should now be thrown away as useless, would justify the whole expense and ten times more.

The first of these was the check given to the furious raid of the rebel iron-clad steamer Merrimac. You will recall the consternation which prevailed throughout the land. You will remember the alarm created by the telegram from General Wool from Fortress Monroe. You will think of the overwhelming anxiety which prevailed in the northern cities when it was learned that the Merrimac had easily destroyed the Congress and the Cumberland, and that there was nothing to prevent her entering any northern harbor and attacking any of our cities where there was sufficient depth of water to admit her. Think of all this, and then estimate values. I was here at that time, and remember what I saw at the other end of the avenue and at this end, and I have no doubt that millions of dollars would have been contributed and tens of millions voted at that time to have that vessel destroyed.

The history of the monitor is not unfamiliar to the House. It illustrates our mode of building vessels. In July, 1861, the Secretary of the Navy recommended an appropriation to make experiments in iron-clads. Congress made an appropriation of \$1,500,000, and provided by law that it should be placed under the direction of a board. That board considered the subject of iron-clads. It was headed by one of our most intelligent and respectable admirals. So little did they think of these

monitor iron-clads, even as a means of defence, that they reported they would only accept Ericsson's as he offered it for \$275,000, provided he would run his own risk. It is part of the history of the country that the iron-clad Merrimac was driven back by a vessel acting on the responsibility of a private individual. Yes, sir, quite a large portion of that moderate compensation of \$275,000 was held back to await the decision of that important naval conflict. And, sir, I may state, what I understand to be a fact, and to illustrate the position that all the naval wisdom is not confined to a board of distinguished officers, that that board—as able, perhaps, as any that could be gathered in the navy—stated to the secretary as their opinion that the probable wants of the service in this rebellion would be *twenty-five* new vessels.

The gentleman from Maryland, if I understand him, talks of the wasteful expense of the navy. I hold in my hand an extract from a leading London paper, the *Star*, showing the expense here as compared with that of England. I will read it:

"Not the least interesting portion of the lengthened annual report of the President is his summary of the condition, the work, and the expense of the Navy during three years of the war. It seems that the Federal Navy now consists of 671 vessels, carrying 4,610 guns, and manned by 51,000 officers and seamen. This necessarily includes those gunboats which have been designed for the service of the Mississippi and similar great rivers; nor can we separate the iron-clads of the monitor class from sea-going ships. That the latter are not only numerous but effective is shown by their capture during the past year of 324 vessels, which must necessarily have been almost all blockade runners. The naval captures since the war commenced number 1,379, of which 267 were steamers, and the prize money already declared amounts to upward of £3,500,000, which does not include many claims in course of adjudication. The preparation and expense of this vast fleet since the war began have amounted to £47,700,000, which is scarcely credible in view of the fact that our navy, without any vast outlay for the production of new vessels and during a season of peace, has cost during the same period £48,000,000. We commend the fact to the notice of Mr. Gladstone in the preparation of his new budget."

That shows that our navy, during a season of war, has not cost as much money by millions as the British navy during a season of profound peace. And you learn from the report of one of the chiefs of bureaus, one of the admirals I have spoken of, the difference the Department finds between paper and gold, as he says he was compelled to pay a contractor \$1,250,000 in currency for materials for his department which the same contractor would furnish for \$500,000 in gold. If you put the Department upon the English gold basis, instead of the total sum named by the President, we should have at least thirty-three per cent. less expenditure here than in England. Would that British Board of Admiralty have done better?

I have specified one of the things accomplished by the monitors, in the repulse of the Merrimac. Another result, of equal and prob-

ably of much greater importance, was that the monitors saved us from foreign intervention. When the news of that combat down in Hampton Roads was flashed across the country, it was thought there was no limit to the possibilities of the monitor system.

If a monitor could stand as that little vessel stood and receive the battering and hammering it received, and repel the attempt to run it down, it was capable of almost anything, it was thought, and greatly exaggerated importance was attached to it in the public mind. That same exaggerated opinion crossed the Atlantic, and the London Times, in view of that combat, said they had but four ships in the British navy. The matter appeared in Parliament, and a distinguished gentleman on the floor said, referring to that combat, that they had no navy. The chairman of one of their committees to examine into the matter of iron-clads, Sir John C. Hay, said:—

"The man who goes into action in a wooden ship is a fool, and the man who sends him there is a villain."

Of course, sir, if England had no navy she could not for a moment think of interfering in our war.

Mr. DAVIS, of Maryland. Admiral Farragut took Mobile with wooden ships.

Mr. PIKE. He declined to make the attack until he obtained the iron-clads.

Mr. DAVIS, of Maryland. But he made the attack with wooden vessels.

Mr. PIKE. But it was the heavy guns of the iron-clads that disabled the Tennessee, and that determined the result of the naval fight in the bay of Mobile.

Well, sir, that fight in Hampton Roads saved us from intervention at that time. But subsequently the pendulum of public opinion swung the other way. The numerous criticisms upon iron-clads and upon the monitor system depressed the public mind as much as it had been previously elevated, and it came to the conclusion, particularly after the attack on Charleston, that the monitors were of comparatively little consequence. A similar revolution of public opinion took place in England, and that princely conceit which had been temporarily dethroned after the fight at Hampton Roads resumed its usual sway in the British mind. They came to the conclusion that there need be no fear of the American iron-clads, and that the exaggerated importance attached to them was mainly in consequence of Yankee bragging.

So the British Government allowed Mr. Laird to go on and build iron-clad vessels for the rebel service. Mr. Adams, our minister, applied to Lord John Russell to put a stop to it, but he failed to satisfy Lord John by his testimony. Mr. Adams furnished further testimony, but still he failed to convince the British minister. In the mean time the fight occurred in the Savannah river, where the Atlanta, built upon British principles, came out to attack one of these monitors, the Weehawken, when the gallant John Rodgers, by five shots from the monitor's fifteen-inch gun, destroyed her efficiency as a vessel-of-war, and obliged her to show the

white flag. The success of the Weehawken rang across the Atlantic, and Lord John said they had proof enough, and the building of British iron-clads was stopped, and Mr. Laird was never afterwards able to furnish them to the rebels. That was a critical period in our history, and we should never forget one of the adjuncts by which we were able to escape its dangers.

Sir, I have great respect for the correspondence of the Secretary of State. I was not of those who, the other day, thought it was fit and wise for the interests of this country to remove the control of our foreign affairs from that Department at the other end of the avenue and transfer it to this House. But high as my respect is for the distinguished gentleman at the head of that Department, and highly as I appreciate his efforts to keep peace with England, I place a higher value upon our humble monitor, and in my judgment the country would make a poor exchange to swap off a monitor for a dispatch.

Well, sir, as I said, in case of a foreign war the first necessity is defence. I have spoken of our means of defence and of the power of our forty-seven monitors. Our next necessity would be a fleet for the purpose of destroying foreign shipping. And we have a fleet for that purpose.

Why, sir, after eliminating, as the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. DAVIS] did yesterday, from our six hundred and seventy-one vessels, and taking out those which he considered worthless, we still have enough left to destroy all foreign commerce. We have forty-seven double-enders of about a thousand tons burden, and carrying heavy armaments. These vessels have already proved their efficiency in this war. They were referred to yesterday in connection with their speed, and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. RICE] told you how fast they were. I have here a memorandum of the speed of other vessels of that class besides the Eutaw, to which he referred, and it shows that they readily reach thirteen and thirteen and a half knots an hour—very fast for war-vessels. They have proved their value in the fight in Mobile Bay and in the attack on Fort Fisher; and we all recollect how gallantly and efficiently the Sassacus ran into the rebel ram Albemarle, and would have destroyed her had she been properly supported by others of the fleet.

Here is what Admiral Porter says of them in a recent dispatch:

"I have found the double-enders a much better class of vessels than they have been represented to me. Indeed, for the purpose for which they were intended (as river boats) they are capital vessels and have only one defect. That is, they do not fire their guns straight ahead. This defect can be easily remedied by cutting a port in the bow, which any commander would be justified in doing when the necessity arises.

"There is a wide difference between the contract double-enders and those built by the Government. The latter are strong and substantial. Some of them are of great speed, and if not quite equal in this respect to the blockade runners they have proved themselves faster than the best rebel privateers.

"Two of the double-enders had their boilers pierced by shot, but that did not put a stop to their operations. They were in every fight afterward, and made quite as much speed as was necessary under one boiler, and good speed at that.

"In action I found the batteries of these vessels very effective, from the fact that I could place them as close as it was possible to go, near the shoals. Each one could bring six heavy guns to bear from one side, which made four of these vessels equal in broadside guns to one of the heavy frigates, the Wabash firing twenty-three nine-inch guns and a one hundred and fifty-pounder pivot from her broadside, while four double-enders fired sixteen nine-inch guns and eight one hundred-pounder rifles, or eleven-inch guns, from a broadside, the favor in guns being on the side of the four double-enders, and the strength and power of endurance being on the side of the frigates.

"For operating in rivers, for which purpose they were intended, these vessels are good, substantial ones, and could be perfectly well adapted to the work required of them, with very little alteration, and those built by Government can go anywhere and at any time."

Besides these double-enders we have forty-four sea-going vessels of from three hundred and fifty to nine hundred tons. Of some of the smaller of these, such as the Yantic, Nyack, and vessels of that class, Admiral Porter says:

"These vessels, though, have proved themselves a perfect success as steam gunboats. They are fast, steady at sea, and come up in every respect to the requirements of a good vessel of war. They will all average eleven knots, are of light draught, and will enter most of these southern harbors at high water. I do not think that they have canvas enough to cruise under sail alone, and the sail is only serviceable to them in very fresh breezes, or in lying-to in a gale. As sea-boats these vessels are unsurpassed."

And in addition to these we have forty-four vessels building or already built, ranging from twelve hundred and fifty to three thousand seven hundred and thirteen tons. Will not that be an effective fleet? These vessels are built with reference to speed, and are capable of accomplishing two results, to destroy all foreign commerce unarmed, and to fight and overcome armed vessels equal or inferior, and escape from superiors. They are in part upon the stocks and in part already launched. They embody the true idea of a cruiser, to fight or run as they deem best. If they do not make fifteen knots an hour they will disappoint everybody concerned in them, and if they make anything near that they will be smarter than any vessel in the British navy, while they are of sufficient size to carry a most formidable armament.

Sir, compare the destruction caused by the Alabama alone, a vessel of very ordinary capacity, with the immense destruction that would be effected by any one of these powerful cruisers, and it is not extravagant to assert that this fleet of ours could sweep from the ocean in sixty days after a declaration of war all the commerce of an enemy.

[Here the hammer fell.]

Mr. ASHLEY. I ask unanimous consent

that the gentleman be allowed to proceed for ten or fifteen minutes.

No objection was made.

Mr. PIKE. Well, these are the two most important objects to accomplish: in the first place, to provide for our own defence; and in the second place, to attack our adversaries.

I have spoken of these cruisers for the purpose of attacking foreign commerce and inferior vessels-of-war. I presume that we are not to repeat the experiment that Napoleon failed to try of an invasion of England with Boulogne as a base. I presume that we shall not attempt the invasion of any foreign country; but in case of a war with any Power holding possessions on this side of the Atlantic, it may be necessary to have vessels powerful in the fight as well as cruisers. Well, sir, we have such vessels in our Navy. Why, sir, besides these forty-seven monitors of the smaller type, we have thirteen of a larger type, from fifteen hundred and sixty-four to thirty-two hundred tons, and how effectual these vessels are we know from actual experiment; their power does not rest on theory only.

Sir, I hold in my hand the published letter of Admiral Porter, a man who has not only a hereditary claim to the consideration of this nation, but a man whose achievements have been twice during this war of so important a character as to receive the unanimous thanks of Congress. His opinion is of value, and what does he say upon the monitor system? I know some landmen critics object to his style of writing, but so long as the country is as well content as now with his *style of fighting* they will be lenient to any peculiarities of the gallant sailor's composition. Why, of the *Monadnock*, one of the smallest of this class of monitors, he says:

"As to the *Monadnock*, she could ride out a gale at anchor in the Atlantic Ocean. She is certainly a most perfect success so far as the hull and machinery are concerned, and is only defective in some minor details, which in the building of these vessels require the superintendence of a thorough seaman and a practical and ingenious man.

"The *Monadnock* is capable of crossing the Ocean alone (when her compasses are once adjusted properly), and could destroy any vessel in the French or British navy, lay their towns under contribution, and return again (provided she could pick up coal) without fear of being followed. She could certainly clear any harbor on our coast of blockaders, in case we were at war with a foreign power. As strong and thick as the sides of this vessel are, one heavy shot from Fort Fisher indented the iron on her side armor, without, however, doing any material damage. These vessels have laid five days under a fire from Fort Fisher, anchored less than eight hundred yards off, and though fired at a great deal, they were seldom hit, and received no injury, except to boats and light matter about decks, which were pretty well cut to pieces."

Now, sir, if a little monitor of fifteen hundred tons, and the only one of the monitors at Fort Fisher, be it added, which was constructed in a navy yard, could accomplish results like this,

what may not be expected from monitors of the larger size, built upon very nearly the same plan, but with those improvements which experience has suggested.

But, suppose that a collision comes between war-vessel and war-vessel; suppose that in a great naval war, when it comes in the future, we are to have a conflict between vessels built on the American pattern and vessels of English construction, what then? No sensible man supposes these iron monsters are to roam the seas in droves like the cheap wooden ships of our last naval war; but, suppose they do, and the conflict comes, and fleet meets fleet?

We shall have our broadside vessels, the *Dunderberg* and the *New Ironsides*. The gentleman from Maryland [Mr. DAVIS] says the *New Ironsides* is a success. I hope so. But the British admiralty, as I have already said, have sent the *Warrior*, of a similar make, into dock to be built over again. Good or bad, we shall have these. Porter has recorded his opinion that "in a fight, the *Ironsides* would be no match for the *Monadnock*."

Besides these, we shall have our turreted fleet—turrets covered with fifteen inches of iron, and holding guns capable of throwing masses of iron of four hundred and fifty pounds' weight. When the twenty-inch guns are got afloat they will send half a ton of metal at a discharge. Can the *Warrior* and her consorts resist that? With sides so high out of water that any gunner can hit them, how long will these monstrous globes of iron rap against the four and five-inch iron covering before gaining admittance? Sir, last year, a single blow from a fifteen-inch gun shivered, at the Washington navy yard, the best six-inch plate of French iron that could be procured. Why will it not repeat that result in the great naval conflict?

I confess, sir, as a man who loves the sea, and has been among vessels from boyhood, I appreciate a sailor's prejudice against these ungainly craft. I would willingly enter into convention with all naval Powers, and agree never to fight in iron-clad ships. They reverse all one's ideas of seamanship and destroy the poetry of the seas. But, it is not a question of sentiment—it is one of fact. And, although untried, what reason have we to doubt the result? For one, sir, I should look to the result of that great day in which the hostile iron-clad navies of the world were engaged—a day which will never come—with confidence that the uncouth turret would come out triumphant over the broadside antagonist of Europe. The day, sir, I feel confident, would be one of "disastrous memory" only to the foes of the Republic.

I have not deemed it worth while to speak of the blunders of the Navy Department. These general results I have spoken of are sufficient to vindicate its management. That it has blundered who doubts? But in this particular it is far in advance of the other departments of this Government? And, if we are to follow the English example and put it in commission, because of blunders, why not

pursue it further, and put all blunderers in commission? Where should we stop? Would Congress be untouched?

Sir, let us have done with this folly, and be

content with a good result, and one of which the nation should be proud rather than pursue phantoms of perfection which are unattainable.

## SPEECH OF HON. JOHN A. GRISWOLD, OF NEW YORK.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

February 4th, 1865.

Mr. GRISWOLD said:

I do not propose to prolong this discussion by considering the amendment which is proposed by the gentleman from Maryland, [Mr. DAVIS;] but I feel it due to myself, as a member of the Committee on Naval Affairs, and also as one possessing some knowledge which I am sure the gentleman from Maryland would be glad to be possessed of, to say a word or two upon the question under discussion.

So far as the gentleman's very able remarks were concerned, I, for one, failed to discover that they were really advocating the amendment which he has offered. It seemed to me, so far as his argument was applicable, that it was aimed directly and exclusively, not at the system, but at the men who administer the affairs of the Navy Department. He proposes, by way of rectifying the difficulties which he alleges to exist there, not to remove inefficient or incompetent persons, but, as I understand it, to embarrass and incur the Department by still greater and still more intricate and minute machinery. Now, it seems to me that if there is any argument at all, the gentleman should have confined himself, not to the theory, but to the manner in which it should be carried out in practice.

The gentleman from Maryland charges upon the Naval Committee, among other things, that it has frittered away its time, and that the bill which he introduced has had no consideration by that committee, partly because the committee has been travelling about the country with reference to locating sites of naval depots. As a member of that committee I beg to have a resolution read by the Clerk, to indicate in some degree how the time of the Committee on Naval Affairs has been occupied during the past and present sessions of Congress.

The Clerk read, as follows:

THIRTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
January 7, 1864.

On motion of Mr. H. W. DAVIS,

Resolved, That the Committee on Naval Affairs do investigate, without delay, and report to this House, the facts in relation to the plans and structure of the marine engines constructed and now in course of construction for the Navy; and in what essential particular they differ from the marine engines heretofore used in the Navy and now used in the commercial steamers and the navies of

France and England; whether their inadequate power and speed are caused by such differences, and by whose authority, and on what experiment, and under whose supervision such changes were introduced; and whether any unfair practices were resorted to by any person in or under the authority of the Navy Department, in the mode of manning or handling the engine of the *Pensacola*, with a view to break it down and bring it and the plan on which it was constructed into disrepute; and whether any person connected with the Navy Department has received any fees or commission or compensation of any kind from any contractor for engines for the Navy, or compelled any payment of fees for patented improvements to persons not entitled to them, by persons contracting for engines or parts thereof, and that the committee be authorized to require the opinion of the Academy of Sciences on any scientific question involved in their investigations and necessary to be solved in order to arrive at a satisfactory result; and that they have power to send for persons and papers, and leave to report at any time.

Attest: EDWARD McPHERSON,  
Clerk.

Mr. GRISWOLD. Mr. Chairman, in carrying out the instructions of that resolution it is proper for me to say that the Committee on Naval Affairs occupied seventy days in the consideration of the questions alluded to in it; took twenty-two hundred pages of evidence—foolscap paper—and examined in detail and at length no less than forty-two witnesses. Now, I submit to the honorable gentleman from Maryland that this work alone is no inconsiderable item in occupying the time of the Naval Committee, and that this consideration, if no other, should have induced him to withhold anything like censure on the proceedings of the Naval Committee.

Passing over that, Mr. Chairman, and not to dwell on the character of the amendment which the gentleman proposes, I desire to say, for one, that instead of dividing the responsibility, as the head of the Navy Department would be able to do by the creation of the board as provided in the amendment, I believe, looking at it from a practical stand-point, that there is far greater security in holding the Secretary of the Navy and the heads of the various bureaus of the Navy Department to a direct accountability, than in dividing their responsibility.

But I pass over that. In listening to the

gentleman's two-hour speech, able and eloquent and ingenious as that gentleman always is, I confess I felt grieved that a member of this Congress should see fit, for the purpose of accomplishing the object which he had in view, to hold up the American Navy, at this critical period of our national history, as being entirely inefficient and powerless; to advertise to the nations of the world that they need have no hesitation as to any interference that they may deem advisable in our affairs, and no fear of any aggressions from the Navy of the United States. I regretted to hear it from the distinguished gentleman from Maryland; but, of course, it is not for me to question either the good taste or judgment of that distinguished gentleman.

I should be glad, Mr. Chairman, to go over in detail, and to have read professional and unprofessional statements in regard to the various facts alleged by the gentleman from Maryland; but the shortness of the time allowed to me, and the fact that other gentlemen desire to occupy a portion of that limited time, compel me to refrain from it. I pass over the commentary which the gentleman made on the attack at Charleston, but should be glad to have an opportunity of showing that what he asserted as true, namely, that in that brief encounter half of that little iron fleet was incapacitated for action, was entirely unfounded and destitute of truth. It will be recollected, Mr. Chairman, that the whole iron-clad fleet to which the gentleman alludes as having attacked Charleston on the occasion referred to, consisted only of eight little monitors. They were created entirely, from stem to stern, and completed and put in action, in the brief period of about six or seven months. The whole fleet cost only about as much as any one single ship-of-war built on the old plan. It cost less than one of those iron-clad ships of England to which the gentleman points with such admiration. The entire number of men employed upon them was one-half what is requisite for an ordinary ship-of-war. Instead of that attack exhibiting their incapacity, it is a memorable fact that, though two thousand shot struck that little fleet, yet, instead of being disabled, they were ready to go into action the following day.

But I pass over all these things, Mr. Chairman, and will confine myself more especially to certain representations which were made in regard to the Dictator; and I am sure that the gentleman from Maryland will be glad to be disabused of the errors under which he is resting. I am sure that he will be glad to know that so important an arm of our national defence is not the entire failure which he alleges. I beg to say to him and to this House, in connection with what he has said with reference to the Dictator, that he is entirely at fault. If I remember correctly, the gentleman alleged that the Dictator was built for a sea-going vessel; that she cost an untold amount; that she is incapable of taking coal across the ocean; that her speed is not over five knots an hour; that she is entirely unworthy to be considered

a sea-going boat; that in her first passage from New York to Fortress Monroe she broke down; and that she lies to-day a helpless hulk. Now, as I said, the gentleman will be glad to know that upon all these points he is entirely mistaken. So far as the cost of the vessel is concerned, it will perhaps be some satisfaction to him to know that, although she was furnished to the Government at an enormous loss to the builder, the amount which the Government paid for the ship was less than it would now be obliged to pay for her engines alone; that the Government could not to-day duplicate the vessel or build one of anything like her power or capacity for less than \$1,000,000 additional to the amount they have paid for her; and that the loss has come out of the pockets of individuals, and not out of the Treasury of the Government.

Now, sir, so far as her capacity for coal is concerned, she is capable of storing seven hundred and fifty tons (to attain seven knots per hour she requires three thousand pounds of coal, or thirty-two tons in twenty-four hours), a supply for twenty-five days, and adequate to a distance of forty-two hundred miles. I speak now of the actual running of the vessel, and make no assertion that cannot be vindicated by the record. Thus much for her capacity for fuel.

As to her sea-going properties, I desire to read a very brief extract from a letter received from Superintending Engineer W. Cosgrove, dated "On board the Dictator, Hampton Roads, Virginia, January 8, 1865." In concluding his report, he says:

"It blew a gale of wind yesterday, with a heavy sea on, and we went through like a pilot-boat, part of the time in company with a good-sized steamer that seemed to be laboring heavily, while we were not heeding either wind or tide. It is really a magnificent sight to see the Dictator in a sea-way."

In regard to her speed, the passage from New York to Fortress Monroe was made under positive instructions not to exceed eight knots per hour—a very proper prudential restriction to be placed on the running of new and very heavy machinery. She went from New York to Fortress Monroe without a consort, and encountered very rough weather; yet in that first passage she attained an average speed of nearly eight knots an hour. Instead of her machinery breaking down, and the vessel lying now a helpless hulk, the whole difficulty arose from the fact that in the main shaft a defect was discovered: one of those defects in forging which no human skill or foresight can guard against, and which can be detected only by the test to which the machinery was subjected.

The defective shaft has been replaced, and the vessel is now, or will in a very short time, be ready for any service that she may be called upon to perform. Allegations have been made as to the steering qualities of the vessel. Upon this point it is sufficient to say that, while this has been regarded as an unavoidable defect in all the iron-clads of England and France, no vessel afloat, iron-clad or other, responds to

the rudder more promptly and with less power than the vessel in question.

The London Times of December 24 publishes an account of a recent experimental trip of the new British iron-clad Achilles. Under a full pressure of steam this vessel required twenty-one men at the rudder, while the Dictator requires but two. The Achilles requires for her turning a circle of three thousand feet; the Dictator seven hundred feet, or about twice her length; an achievement that will be regarded as a marvel by the naval architects of the world.

In short, Mr. Chairman, I allege without the fear of contradiction that the indications tend to prove that the Dictator is as perfect a sea-going vessel as has yet been built for the American or the navy of any other country, and that there is not a single particular in which she fails to realize the utmost expectations of those who were most sanguine in regard to her. With the indications of speed which she has already exhibited, her utter impregnability to all ordnance yet devised, and with the capacity of carrying a fifteen or twenty-inch gun, and hurling against her adversary a solid shot of four hundred and fifty to six hundred pounds, she may well defy any—I had almost said all—of the ships-of-war that can be brought against her.

This, sir, is the vessel which the gentleman from Maryland would consign with so much nonchalance to the obscurity of a failure. We are told that with a board such as is proposed by the bill under consideration, instead of con-

structing vessels of this class we shall have copied the models that have been furnished by our transatlantic friends across the ocean; this, too, in face of public acknowledgments, after the memorable conflict at Hampton Roads, by the chief constructor of the British navy and by members of the British Parliament, that the navy of England was a failure, and that the fact had been demonstrated in America that the power of a navy consisted not in the number of guns, but in their size.

Before the conflict of iron-clads alluded to, the highest authority of England pronounced with a tone of entire confidence that it was impossible to construct a ship-of-war impregnable to modern ordnance. Well, sir, we have had no Boards of Admiralty to discuss and decide as to the plans of ships-of-war, but have appealed to the unlimited and unfettered genius of our country. I require no stronger proof of the correctness of our policy, and of the objections to the plans proposed by the bill under consideration, than the fact that we have stepped out of the beaten channel, broken loose from the trammels which have tied down the inventive genius of other lands, and by one bold step placed this nation far in advance of every other in a position either for offence or defence in naval warfare that secures us against all interference from foreign Powers.

Mr. Chairman, I have occupied more time than I intended, and now yield to the gentleman who desires to occupy the residue of the time assigned to this debate.

## SPEECH OF HON. HENRY T. BLOW, OF MISSOURI.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Monday, February 6, 1865.*

Mr. BLOW said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The subject under discussion has been invested with extraordinary interest by the eloquence of the honorable gentleman from Maryland, whose acknowledged ability eminently fits him for the Herculean task which he has undertaken. I have listened to his statements and reflections with intense and painful interest, and with a regret far exceeding any that I have ever experienced upon this floor. I do not doubt the purity of the gentleman's intentions; no one regards him more warmly or esteems him more highly than myself. But I do most emphatically condemn the taste and judgment which induced him to attack the navy of our country, and to suggest a remedy for fancied imperfections and failures in the midst of its greatest achievements, and at a time when every consideration of justice, patriotism, and policy should have prompted the statesmen of the two Houses to present the power and progress of this strong arm of our

Government, and not to indulge in arguments and criticisms calculated to degrade it and our Administration in the eyes of the world.

I hope I may be permitted, therefore, in my own way to present another view of the Navy of the United States: not going into useless details nor classifying our vessels as he has done to show how few are as perfect and as well suited to the age as they would have been with years to model and build them, but rapidly reviewing their main features and services, begging you to recollect that they sprung into existence with a rapidity which has never been equalled in the history of the world, and indulging only in such statements and assertions as will be supported by the evidence of the brightest and purest men in this land. I say in my own way, Mr. Chairman, for no report of the speech has been printed, and I have sought access only to those points referring especially to the monitors and the conflict with the Tennessee in Mobile Bay, and my aim will

be rather to place the Navy as it really is before the country than to follow the gentleman in all his disparagements of it.

The honorable gentleman who is leading this attack upon the United States Navy says—I quote his own language—

“The Monitor accidentally came into Hampton Roads as the Merrimac was trying to destroy, as it had already destroyed, some of our vessels. A collision took place. Neither party was destroyed; neither vessel was sunk; neither party was whipped, as the boy said, and the country ran wild over two guns in a cheese-box on a raft, not having done anything.”

Such is the slur attempted to be cast upon a Department which so promptly and timely completed a vessel which preserved the character of the nation, the safety of its capital, and untold millions of its property. Let us go back for a moment and examine into the circumstances which rendered this combat the most famous of the war. The Merrimac, on the 8th of March, 1862, was the most formidable iron vessel in the world; she had on that day destroyed two of our frigates, utterly unable to cope with her; before her lay millions of property, which she proposed to destroy the next day, and then the Chesapeake could be cleared out, or, if her commander chose, every vessel in the Potomac between Fortress Monroe and Alexandria could be destroyed. Ay, more! our navy-yard here, with all its value to our Government at that critical period, would have fallen a victim to her irresistible power. If not this destruction, then her course in the Chesapeake would have cut off the gentleman's own Monumental City from the world. No communication could have existed between it and the capital except by railroad, and the army of Beauregard would have turned its course toward Washington instead of evacuating its long-held position when the news came to him that the brightest day in the history of the confederacy was succeeded by one that blasted all her hopes of naval supremacy and protection.

The little cheese-box, so insignificant as hardly to be seen by the side of her immense mailed antagonist, carried within her contracted walls the honor and genius of a great nation, and her two guns, an experiment yet untried by the great naval Powers of England and France, resounded through the world and said, what? Not that America was without a navy, without skill, genius, and the spirit of progress; but that the navies of those two nations belonged to the past, and were not able to dictate to the people who were struggling for freedom what course they should pursue toward rebels enlisted in the unholy cause of slavery. The gentleman has alluded to Admiral Farragut. I have asked this greatest of naval heroes the value of the contest between the Monitor and Merrimac, and whether if all the monitors since built on the same plan had been sunk into the ocean, costing, as my friend says, \$13,000,000, the experience of that combat was not worth them all. He replied, with the comprehensiveness and patriotism that

distinguish him, that such a result could not be estimated by dollars; in fact, the moral weight of it was above all calculation. So much for the honorable gentleman's cheese-box. Such must have been the opinion of Secretary Chase also, for when the hour came that a great responsibility was to be taken, he did not hesitate to counsel the honorable Secretary of the Navy to persevere in creating such protection as this Monitor had proved to be.

Nor will I, Mr. Chairman, withhold from Captain Ericsson the gratitude we owe him; his genius has accomplished too much in this single instance for me to allude disparagingly to speculators and contractors. The gentleman is unsparing; he condemns the Dictator on a rumor; damns the Puritan before she is launched, and disgraces the Dunderberg in the face of all that is claimed for her by her experienced builder, who has some character as a gentleman of honor, and a reputation as a constructor acquired by building some of the finest vessels that ever floated under any flag. My hope and belief is that the gentleman himself will one day own that he spoke rashly of this great vessel.

I will make no comments upon the statesmanship which so unjustly deals with a department and its contractors, against which no single discreditable act can be brought, in the case at least of these vessels, remarking at the same moment, Mr. Chairman, that for four years all my time and all my thoughts have been devoted to protecting my Government against every man, high or low, that would take advantage of this trying time in its existence to build up a fortune for himself. I am no favorite with contractors or speculators. Congress, it is true, voted Captain Ericsson an immense sum. I had faith in the committee which recommended it. May I remind the gentleman that on that occasion he should have stood by his Government with his powerful influence.

I do not stand here, Mr. Chairman, to defend the monitor system of construction, or any other system of naval architecture. Their merits and defects have been the subject of essays from experts and officers of high standing in our Navy. Some of these I have carefully examined, and the exalted reputation of many of the writers must give great force, if it does not add conviction, to their arguments. But few of us are competent to decide this interesting question from our own knowledge of the principles underlying it, or from any experience which we ourselves have had with the vessels. We must necessarily take the testimony of those who have such knowledge, and who possess such experience. Fortunately we have this testimony, and we have it of such high character that it should carry conviction to the minds of all unprejudiced men. I beg the indulgence of the House while I introduce some of this testimony. For no other cause has the Navy Department been so much and so severely criticized as for the construction of the monitors, and believing myself that the administration of that department has been eminently successful, I propose to show that in the con-

struction of the monitors it acted with sound judgment, and was guided by the best lights it could obtain.

The gentleman from Maryland has severely animadverted upon the building of so many monitors immediately after the contest of the Monitor and Merrimac, without that careful investigation which was necessary to secure the department and the country against the evils to result, and which the gentleman endeavored to show, have resulted from constructing vessels of no value to us.

The plan for building the first monitor was submitted to a board of admiralty before it was adopted by the department, and this board was composed of Admirals Smith, Davis, and Paulding. We may form some idea of the favorable opinion of the plan entertained by the board, and of the prompt action of the department by the following quotation from a letter written by her constructor (Ericsson) to the New York Herald upon the subject.—

“A more prompt and spirited action is probably not on record in a similar case than that of the Navy Department as regards the Monitor. The committee of naval commanders, appointed by the Secretary to decide on the plans of gunboats laid before the Department, occupied me less than two hours in explaining my new system. In about two hours more the committee had come to a decision. After their favorable report had been to the Secretary, I was called into his office, where I was detained less than five minutes. In order not to lose any time, the Secretary ordered me to ‘go ahead at once.’ Consequently, while the clerks of the Department were engaged in drawing up the formal contract, the iron which now forms the keel plate of the Monitor was drawn through the rolling-mill.”

On the 10th of March, Captain G. J. Van Brunt, commanding the frigate Minnesota, gave the following testimony to the merits of this “cheese-box,” as the honorable gentleman has sneeringly called her.

“At six A. M. the enemy again appeared, coming down from Craney Island, and I beat to quarters, but they ran past my ship and were heading for Fortress Monroe, and the retreat was beaten to allow my men to get something to eat. The Merrimac ran down near to the Rip-Raps, and then turned into the channel through which I had come. Again all hands were called to quarters, and when she approached within a mile of us I opened upon her with my stern guns, and made signal to the Monitor to attack the enemy. She immediately ran down in my wake, right within range of the Merrimac, completely covering my ship as far as was possible with her diminutive dimensions, and, much to my astonishment, laid herself right alongside of the Merrimac, and the contrast was that of a pigmy to a giant. Gun after gun was fired by the Monitor, which was returned with whole broadsides from the rebels, with no more effect, apparently, than so many pebble-stones thrown by a child. After a while they commenced manœuvring, and we could see the little battery point her bow for the rebels, with the intention, as I thought, of sending a shot through her bow port-hole, then she would shoot by her, and rake her through the stern. In the mean time the rebels were pouring in broadside after broadside, but almost all her shot flew over

the little submerged propeller, and when they struck the bomb-proof tower, the shot glanced off without producing any effect, clearly establishing the fact that wooden vessels cannot contend with iron-clad ones; for never before was anything like it dreamed of by the greatest enthusiast in maritime warfare.

“The Merrimac, finding that she could make nothing of the Monitor, turned her attention once more to me. In the morning she had put an eleven-inch shot under my counter, near the water line; and now, on her second approach, I opened upon her with all my broadside guns and ten-inch pivot—a broadside which would have blown out of water any timber-built ship in the world. She returned my fire with her rifled bow gun, with a shell which passed through the chief engineer’s state-room, through the engineers’ mess-room, amidships, and burst in the boatswain’s room, tearing four rooms all into one in its passage, and exploding two charges of powder, which set the ship on fire, but it was promptly extinguished by a party headed by my first lieutenant. Her second shell went through the boiler of the tug-boat Dragon, exploding it, and causing some consternation on board my ship for the moment, until the matter was explained. This time I had concentrated upon her an incessant fire from my gun-deck, spar-deck, and fore-castle pivot guns, and was informed by my marine officer, who was stationed on the poop, that at least fifty solid shot struck her on her slanting side without producing any apparent effect. By the time she had fired her third shell the little Monitor had come down upon her, placing herself between us, and compelled her to change her position, in doing which she grounded; and again I poured into her all the guns which could be brought to bear upon her. As soon as she got off she stood down the bay, the little battery chasing her with all speed, when suddenly the Merrimac turned around and ran full speed into her antagonist. For a moment I was anxious; but instantly I saw a shot plunge into the iron roof of the Merrimac, which surely must have damaged her.”

Under the same date Captain H. Y. Purviance, of the frigate St. Lawrence, states the following:

“The Monitor, whose performance more than equalled the highest expectations, contributed most powerfully to the withdrawal of the Merrimac, and her earlier arrival would have prevented the unfortunate loss of our two defenceless frigates.”

In a letter dated the 9th of March, 1862, Chief Engineer Stimers says, addressing Captain Ericsson:

“After a stormy passage, which proved us to be the finest sea boat I was ever in, we fought the Merrimac for more than three hours this forenoon, and sent her back to Norfolk in a sinking condition.”

Lieutenant S. D. Greene, of the United States Navy, and executive officer of the Monitor, states, under date of March 27, to the Department:

“I received to-day your communication of the 25th instant. I do not consider this steamer a sea-going vessel. During her passage from New York her roll was very easy and slow, and not at all deep. She pitched very little, and with no strain whatever. She is buoyant and not very lively. The inconveniences we experienced can

be easily remedied. For smooth-water operations, such as she was engaged in on the 9th instant, I think her a most desirable vessel. The opinion of experienced seamen on board is the same as my own."

The Department had therefore the action of a board of admiralty recommending a trial of the monitor plan. It had the evidence of the remarkable invulnerability of the completed vessels in this contest. It had the testimony of all these naval officers, and the oral representations of many more in praise of the vessel, and it knew the disaster that would have resulted to us if the Merrimac had not been defeated. It knew that the Merrimac was not destroyed, and had no means of knowing whether she had been seriously damaged. It knew that other iron-plated vessels were being constructed by the rebels, and it knew the responsibility which rested upon it of providing for the increasing efforts of the rebels in the same direction. It had no other armored vessels afloat upon tide-water with which to compare the merits of the Monitor. Those on the Mississippi had been eminently successful under the skilful and gallant Foote, but they were not capable of being moved from harbor to harbor on the sea-coast. The iron-clads of Europe had not given satisfaction to the Powers which constructed them. Our own Ironsides had not yet been completed, and was not for many months afterwards. The wants of the Government were immediate, were pressing, and were of the most extraordinary character. With all this testimony in favor of the Monitor, and the absence of any better plan being submitted and successfully tested, the Department was not only justified in building as many monitors as Congress would pay for, but it would have been culpable in the highest degree not to have put them in the course of immediate construction. The wisdom of the decision of the Department to build these monitors was not only sustained by the state of facts at the time they were placed under construction, but the testimony which is borne by the highest officers of the Government in their favor since they have been completed and tried makes the action of the Department in this whole matter as invulnerable as are the vessels themselves. I propose as briefly as possible to present a small part of this testimony, but sufficient, I trust, to prove the truth of this assertion.

Rear Admiral Dahlgren, in his report on iron-clads, says:—

"During the progress of the engineers toward Wagner the iron-clads played an important part, using their guns whenever an opportunity offered, as shown in the instances quoted on page 583. It may be readily conceived that, all things being equal, it was just as easy for the rebels to have worked toward our position as it was for our troops to work toward theirs. But there was a serious difference in the fact that the cannon of the iron-clads, and also of the gunboats, completely enfiladed the entire width of the narrow island, and absolutely interdicted any operation of the kind on the part of the rebels. In addition, whenever their fire was bearing severely on our own workmen, a request from the general always

drew the fire of the vessels; and I do not know that it failed to be effective in any instance.

"As a consequence the rebels were restricted to Wagner, and were powerless to hinder the progress of the trenches that were at last carried into the very ditch of the work, and decided its evacuation without assault.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The duties of the iron-clads were not performed under idle batteries. The guns of Wagner never failed to open on them, and fired until their crews were driven, by those of our iron-clads, to take shelter in the bomb-proofs. One of these cannon, a ten-inch, left deep dents on every turret that will not easily be effaced. \* \*

"During the operations against Morris Island the nine iron-clads fired eight thousand projectiles, and received eight hundred and eighty-two hits. Including the service at Sumter in April, and the Ogechee, the total number was eleven hundred and ninety-four. \* \* \*

"The battering received was without precedent. The Montauk had been struck two hundred and fourteen times; the Weehawken one hundred and eighty-seven times, and almost entirely by ten-inch shot. What vessels have ever been subjected to such a test? \* \* \* \*

"The speed of the monitors is not great (seven knots), but it is quite respectable with a clean bottom, and is fully equal to that of the Ironsides. Their steerage is peculiar, but when understood and rightly managed not difficult of control. They pivot with celerity, and in less space than almost any other class of vessel. \* \*

"The monitors could operate in most of the channels; could direct their fire around the whole circle, and were almost equally well defended on all sides.

"The defects in both classes of vessels are susceptible of being remedied partially or entirely. The defence of the Ironsides could be made complete, and that of the monitors equally so. \* \*

"The Ironsides is a fine, powerful ship. Her armor has stood heavy battering very well, and her broadside of seven eleven-inch guns and one eight-inch rifle has always told with signal effect when opened on the enemy. Draught of water about fifteen and a half to sixteen feet. Speed six to seven knots, and crew about four hundred and forty men."

As no other officer in the service has had so much experience with the monitors, and none are more competent to judge of their merits than this able officer, his testimony is entitled to the highest respect.

Admiral Porter's testimony of the seaworthiness and efficiency of the monitors at Fort Fisher is of such recent date and possesses such deep interest that it is doubtless fresh in the minds of the members of the House and need not be repeated.

In his letter to the Department, dated February 16, 1864, he says of the first monitor:

"I remember pronouncing that vessel 'a perfect success,' and capable of defeating anything that then floated.' I was looked upon at that time as something of an enthusiast, as my opinions were widely at variance with those of some scientific gentlemen. The results have justified me in forming a high estimate of the monitor principle."

In this connection, the opinion of the able chief of the Engineer corps of the Army is

not without great interest. General Barnard says:

"I formed a high opinion of armored and turreted vessels built after Mr. Ericsson's designs, particularly as harbor-defence vessels; in fact, coming to the conclusion that his plans furnish the best solution of the problem of constructing vessels for this purpose. I also believed that in the Dictator and Puritan we should have vessels capable of encountering the heaviest seas, if not of keeping the sea a long time, and making transatlantic voyages, and that, from their armament and slight exposure to an enemy's shot, they would contend successfully with anything afloat."

To this testimony I might go on and add the testimony of Commodore Rodgers and other officers in the Navy; but enough has certainly been adduced to show that the Department has acted with good judgment in ordering the monitors, and to satisfy any unprejudiced mind that our iron-clads are not only not a failure, but constitute the hope, the pride, and the bulwark of the Republic. That they have faults I have no doubt, but they are better than anything our enemies have, and before they get anything to equal them the ingenuity of our constructors will have perfected the novel ideas of Captain Ericsson and others, and we will still be ahead of all competitors.

The Department has been assailed for not constructing more vessels of the Ironsides type instead of so many monitors. It is denounced for constructing monitors before their merits were fully established by other contests and trials besides that with the Merrimac. But the assailants of the Department forget that no contracts for ocean vessels have been made since the trial of the Ironsides, for the very good reason that Congress refused the necessary appropriation for the purpose. The plan of Mr. Webb for the Dunderberg and that of Mr. Whitney for the Keokuk were the only plans for ocean vessels approved by the board of officers appointed to examine and report upon them while the Ironsides was building.

The eminent success of the Monadnock not only bears evidence to the ability of the officials of the Department, but to the wisdom of ordering the construction of four of this class, all designed in the Department and constructed in our own navy-yards. They are double-turreted vessels, built of wood, and heavily plated.

The gentleman told us on last Thursday that our iron-clad navy was a failure. Constructions that have grown up like magic under the inspiring touch of American energy and American talent, and which constituted the pride of our people and the bulwark of the nation against foreign arrogance; this best bower of the ship of State, upon which our faith was resting to hold us in safety from the hidden rocks and breakers of hostile shores, is declared to be a failure. These terrible engines of naval war that bear upon their mailed coats countless marks of shot and shell, that have been so carefully studied by the ablest engineers of enlightened Europe for the last three years, which have furnished models to be copied by Denmark and Sweden and Russia, after the most mature and careful investiga-

tions, are declared to be failures. We are gravely told that this iron-clad navy has accomplished nothing; that they have never silenced forts of any kind. Shade of the immortal Foote! are the glories of Fort Henry so soon forgotten? Have the dead on the decks of the DeKalb, the Cincinnati, and their consorts at Donelson no place in the national memory? Are the fires which lighted the island scenery of No. 10 from a hundred iron throats, as the Carondelet and Pittsburg passed them, no longer remembered? Is the desperate conflict with the rebel rams at Fort Pillow and at Memphis not written in American history? Was nothing done by the gallant Porter and the Essex, when the Arkansas was destroyed? Have the trophies of Arkansas Post no glorious reminiscences? Has the history of Vicksburg and Grand Gulf been lost in oblivion? Why did the old salamander, he of the iron heart, with the laurels of New Orleans fresh upon his brow, and the praises of a great nation for his gallant deeds still echoing over the land; why, I say, did our country's pride, the noble Farragut, deem it unsafe to attack Mobile until he had four of these iron-clads which are pronounced so worthless by the gentleman from Maryland? Did the four hundred and fifty pounder that crashed through the side of the Tennessee effect nothing? Nor the one hundred and eighty-pounder blows of the Mississippi river iron-clads, when disabling her steering gear, and closing her ports, effect nothing, when the lighter shots of the wooden vessels were falling harmless upon her? Will the gentleman from Maryland insist that the wooden vessels captured the almost impregnable Tennessee, when the published survey of the captured vessel made by Captains Jenkins and Alden, Commander Le Roy, and Chief Engineer Wilkinson, shows exactly how the damage was inflicted that placed her at the mercy of the fleet? He sees no virtue in an iron-clad carrying hundreds of tons of armor, to enable her to cope with our enemies, unless she steers with all the facility of a pleasure yacht; and because one of the four iron-clads which entered Mobile Bay on the 5th of August had her turrets disabled in that fierce contest, he condemns the whole as worthless.

For the information of the honorable gentleman, and to correct any false impression as to the value of the four double-turreted vessels now holding the harbor of Mobile, I will ask the Clerk to read a portion of a private letter from a brave and skilful officer in the fleet at Mobile to the gentleman who designed and constructed those vessels on the Mississippi river. This officer holds the very important position of fleet engineer of the western Gulf blockading squadron, and knowing him well, I can bear my humble testimony to his purity of character as well as the value of his testimony.

The Clerk read, as follows:

WEST GULF SQUADRON,  
ENGINEER'S DEPARTMENT,  
December 15, 1864.

MY DEAR SIR: \* \* \* I know you have been kept posted on our monitors by your many

friends attached to them in our squadron. You have no doubt been informed that with a little effort we got the other two, namely, the Milwaukee and Kickapoo. I got the admiral to change off the Manhattan (Ericsson monitor) and the rebel ram Tennessee for them, and before this gets to you we shall have them at anchor within three miles of Mobile, the only vessels upon which we depend for an *entrée* to that harbor when we get ready to make the start. They have grown so in favor with everybody that it almost amounts to an affection, particularly after the fight in Mobile Bay.

I feel happy to think that these vessels have come up to my expectations, and that I succeeded in carrying out my views and wishes, long since expressed, namely, to get them in the Mobile fight. They did it, and I am satisfied.

Yours, truly,

WILLIAM S. SHOCK, U. S. N.

To JAMES B. EADS, Esq.

Mr. BLOW. I will state that I myself have heard Admiral Farragut speak in the highest terms of these vessels. He does not hesitate to say that they are absolutely necessary now to hold Mobile Bay; that the management of the iron-clad Chickasaw was splendid, and that the strength and power of the Manhattan were terrific. I agree with my friend from Maryland that Farragut can go anywhere in a wooden vessel, but that is simply because he is an iron-clad himself. But I have still other evidence from an impartial naval officer who has always been regarded with favor by our countrymen, and who differs widely with the gentleman from Maryland in regard to these costly guns inclosed in a cheese-box. It is dated Claremont, January 11, 1865, is from the Prince de Joinville, and the extracts from it read as follows:

"The glorious action of the Kearsarge and Alabama, and the magnificent fight of Admiral Farragut, must be studied in all their details. The mode of fighting the forts adopted by Admiral Farragut was an act of genius, and his orders were carried out in the most beautiful manner. But the Tennessee was a very serious enemy, and it required the *fifteen-inch at close quarters to do it for her.*

"The amount of resistance furnished by the Tennessee, and every other example of your war, show how useful iron-clads are for harbor and coast defence. English, French, Italians, Turks, and Spaniards are building very expensive sea-going iron-clads, but with some misgivings, and I understand their misgivings. Build a gunboat of great speed, with a few lines of thickness in bed-plates in excess of those of the English and French iron-clads, and with one good big smooth-bore gun, and she will be a match for the whole fleet."

I like this letter. It shows a correct appreciation of our Navy and of the genius of our people.

The gentleman from Maryland, not recollecting the unfortunate result attending a previous controversy on the subject of improved steam machinery, has alluded in rather unhandsome terms to that designed by the Department, and now being built for our new vessels-of-war. It is well known throughout the world that we are specially skilled in the

planning and manufacturing of steam-engines, and the completeness of our great constructions for the merchant and naval service is universally acknowledged. I beg to refer him to the report of the Naval Committee of the House who have so ably vindicated their industry and ability on this floor, and which is thus noticed by the Army and Navy Register in its issue of last Saturday, the 4th instant.

"The Naval Committee of the House are understood to have unanimously adopted the report of their chairman, Mr. A. H. RICE, on the subject of the resolution introduced during the last session; on the condition of naval machinery built by Mr. Isherwood, the chief of the Bureau of Steam Engineering; the causes of the failure of the machinery of the Pensacola, from the plans of Mr. E. N. Dickerson, and the administration of the engineering department of the Navy, including the charges of fraud and incapacity. The report vindicates the management of the Bureau of Steam Engineering, stating that the machinery is in accordance with the latest improvements, and that the mode adopted of using the steam, with a very moderate measure of expansion, is in accordance with the most recent scientific researches and practical experiments, and has the indorsement of all able and experienced engineers. The comparison of his machinery with that previously constructed for our Navy, and for the French and English navies, and for the merchant marine, shows an incontestable superiority and a greater speed of vessels."

Mr. Chairman, the iron-clad vessels alluded to as having achieved the great victories that so strengthened the cause of the Union in the valley of the Mississippi, were mostly constructed by a man whose genius was brought forth by this rebellion and the necessities of the country, and whose future, if we are faithful to ourselves, will be as brilliant as his past has been patriotic and useful. I allude, sir, to the only genius of the day who is now conceded by the naval men of this country to be without a superior, if he has a rival—James B. Eads, of St. Louis, who has constructed twenty-one iron-clad vessels, whose successes are the pride of the whole nation.

Sir, if the entire monitor and iron-clad fleets constructed on the sea-board had failed, and nothing had been accomplished except what has been achieved by the western iron-clad navy, this country could well afford to forgive the errors which had caused such a failure in the magnificent result we have obtained through their agency West. If the twenty light-draught monitors now constructing, about which so much has been said, are failures, a result which I hope will never be established, I still contend that, taking all that the entire navy has done, there are no services equal to it in the history of navies and navy struggles. Let those at home who are not satisfied with results which have startled England and France from their fancied security, enlighten us as to the exact method which they would have pursued under similar circumstances and in detail, and then we can be able to judge better of the errors complained of.

And are we to be told that this great country cannot in times like these go boldly into con-

structions and experiments, if you please, which promise at least success? Are we to stand still when our rebel adversaries, weak in money and mechanics, are duplicating their Merrimacs, Atlantas, and Tennessees? Is our Government to be held up to the criticisms of the world, and our own people to be the means of exhibiting every little failure made in this gigantic struggle? Are the men whose integrity, patriotism, skill, and devotion have never been doubted, to be prostrated the very hour when their labors are being crowned with success? Let us indulge the hope, sir, that such a result will not occur.

There are now in the Department plans of a steamer that it is claimed can run to the city of London and back again without coaling, and destroy within the time \$500,000,000 of English property on the way and in that city, resisting all the engines of war yet devised by English skill and English gold. These plans have been submitted by one whose enterprises have ever been successful, and whose genius has been acknowledged by the highest naval authorities of our country.

My feelings and policy dictate that we should go on in the work of construction. Now, more than ever, do we need Ironsides, Monadsnocks, and the Leviathan that can destroy the hopes of tyrants as well as their cities and forts. Let us not waste our time in idle disputes and unfriendly criticisms. Remember that Bull Run, Chickasaw Bluffs, Red River, and the two hundred thousand dead in Virginia, are passed over in the glorious victories and marches of Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, and Thomas; so must our errors of construction, if they really exist, be forgotten in the brilliant achievements which have immortalized Foote, Farragut, Davis, Porter, Du Pont, Dahlgren, and a host of other naval heroes.

But I pass, Mr. Chairman, with much pleasure from the discussion of points that I deeply regret were ever pressed upon us, and beg the attention of the committee to some considerations of grave importance.

We have achieved our present supremacy on the ocean as a result incident to the suppression of the rebellion. Possessing the domination of the seas, policy, interest, and humanity conspire to prompt its retention. When we are able to sweep the ocean and bid defiance to all whom interest or passion might otherwise prompt to attack us, we need not fear that our peace will be molested. We have the highest possible motives for maintaining this superiority; but with the enormous ability to construct ocean steamers possessed by Great Britain at this day, we cannot hope to do so without such immediate legislation as will tend to increase our facilities for the construction and repair of iron-clad vessels. The developments of the war have shown that the British navy is to-day far inferior to our own. But it is only so because of the immense additions and improvements in construction that have been made by us during the rebellion. These improvements are well known to England and France, and if they do not at once adopt them

it will be only because they hope to get some that are better, not because they will trust to those of the past. In a very few years those nations, England especially, will possess a navy quite as powerful as our own, if we remain idle. "Eternal vigilance is the price of safety."

At this day England is turning out from her immense private yards on the Clyde, the Thames, the Mersey, the Tees, the Tyne, and Wear, five hundred thousand tons of iron merchant vessels per annum. She is to-day duplicating the entire tonnage of our navy annually in iron steam vessels for the ocean, and this in her private yards alone. We are not able to build in all our private establishments together more than one-sixth part of this tonnage. This is a startling fact that it is well for us to remember; but it is not the only remarkable truth which has been brought to our attention by the very able and interesting report of Chief Engineer J. W. King, United States Navy, and embodied in and published with the last annual report of the Secretary of the Navy. Mr. King was sent last summer by the Department to examine the dock-yards and iron-clad establishments in England and France, and I am glad to be able to say that every facility was extended to him by the Governments of those countries in the performance of his duties.

We learn from Mr. King's report the fact that England is far ahead of us in her ability to construct ocean iron steamers in her private yards; and that in her national establishments for the construction and repair of armored war vessels she is beyond all comparison superior to us. From his report it appears that there are in England seven naval or dock-yards; one of them, that at Chatham, is being extensively enlarged specially for the construction of iron-armored vessels-of-war, while another, situated at Portsmouth, is to be enlarged with like views. The total area of the British dock-yards exceeds five hundred and fifty acres, possessing thirty-six and a quarter acres basin accommodations, 32 stone dry-docks, and 31 ship-houses; and when Chatham and Portsmouth are completed, the ground covered by them all will exceed one thousand acres, containing 44 stone dry-docks and as many ship-houses; all other preparations being proportionate and comparatively gigantic. Besides these national works for the construction of fleets, the British have vast resources in the shape of iron-ship-yards and iron-works. It is seen that on the Clyde are 33 iron-ship-building yards, the productions from which in 1863 were 170 iron vessels with an aggregate of 120,700 tons. On the river Thames during the same year 117,000 tons of iron vessels were built; on the Mersey 80,000 tons; on the Tyne 51,236; on the Wear 25,000, and on the Tees 15,000—making a total of 408,996 tons of iron vessels built in 1863; and it is estimated that during the past year, 1864, upward of 600,000 tons of iron vessels were constructed in the British dock-yards, exclusive of those built for the royal navy. Some of the private iron ship-yards have large capitals, and are very extensive and complete in all respects. Mr. King's re-

port informs us that the constructive capabilities of either of the great Thames yards are equal to 25,000 tons, or ten heavy iron vessels in hand and progressing simultaneously. Such are the facilities possessed by the British for building and equipping iron-clads. The Admiralty there could in the event of war, in addition to their own extensive dock-yards, command the services of more than 40 private iron-ship-building yards.

Now, how are we prepared to build sea-going armored ships? With resources in iron and material superior to those of England, the few private yards in this country are mere makeshifts compared with them. The combined capabilities of them all are not equal to one such as are to be found on the river Thames. What are our navy-yards, and how are they prepared to meet the changes taking place in ships-of-war, and to meet the demands of a Navy which has grown in proportions until it is acknowledged to be superior to any other afloat? The Chatham dock-yard when completed will have an area of three hundred and eighty-nine acres, the whole of the ground being occupied by basins, dry-docks, ship-houses, and substantial steam factories. The New York navy-yard, the most important we possess, covers an available space of about twenty-five acres, not one-fifteenth part as large as the Chatham yard. It has one stone dry-dock, two ship-houses, and other limited facilities for wood ship-building only. The Philadelphia navy-yard has a total area of but nine acres. It would require forty-three such yards to make one equal to the Chatham yard in England. It has one wood floating-dock, and two ship-houses, but not a steam factory, or any preparations for either the construction or repair of steam machinery. The Boston navy-yard, of but small area, has one stone dry-dock, three ship-houses, and is comparatively well prepared for constructing and repairing vessels; while the yard at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, is but little in advance of that at Philadelphia. The Washington yard has greater facilities for building machinery than all the others, but has not a single dock. Our navy-yards on the Atlantic coast possess two stone dry-docks and two wooden floating-docks, with other proportionate facilities, while the British will soon have forty-four stone dry-docks, besides unequalled resources in private docks. On the river Mersey alone there are twenty-four dry or graving-docks!

Apart from the limited facilities of our yards, they are in no way prepared, nor is there sufficient room in them, for building iron-clads. The Secretary of the Navy has frequently called attention to the subject, and the Department is much embarrassed for want of a proper yard, and the longer action in this matter is delayed the greater will be the difficulties and embarrassments that will arise to the Department, and the more imminent the danger to the country. Shall we allow this session to pass without deciding on so important a national measure—one in which the whole nation is interested, and in which no sectional or party feelings should or ought to interfere?

When we consider the manner in which our Navy, exclusive of iron-clads, has been improvised by the purchase of vessels from the merchant marine, we can readily see the great superiority which England would possess in drawing an increase to her navy from a merchant service which is increasing at the rate of five hundred thousand tons per annum in iron vessels under the stimulus of a demand which has resulted from her unfriendly conduct in giving aid and comfort to the enemies of this Government.

The want of at least one complete navy-yard near the Atlantic sea-board, with these startling facts in full view before us, is a great national misfortune, and its immediate construction is demanded by every consideration of interest, prudence, and policy. And yet there are gentlemen on this floor ready to vote defiant resolutions embodying the Monroe doctrine, and to march our armies into Canada, but who can go quietly to their homes and tell their constituents that they have faithfully discharged the trust confided in them, when they know we do not possess one single national establishment in the whole country for the construction of iron-clads, nor even the proper facilities for docking and repairing the armored vessels which now constitute our sole dependence, notwithstanding the Secretary of the Navy has time and again urged upon us the duty of providing these great national means of preserving our present Navy and providing for the inevitable necessity of its increase.

The unfriendly spirit manifested by England during the last four years toward us, and the ambitious designs of the French emperor, so boldly developing themselves upon this continent, should admonish us to be prepared for a conflict that will surely come when one or the other of those great Powers feel that they are safe in precipitating it. A jealous regard for the condition and effectiveness of our naval establishment is the surest way of keeping the peace and inspiring those and all other great Powers with a wholesome respect for the American Republic. I apprehend that there are few members upon this floor who do not feel satisfied that our iron-clad navy has been the only obstacle to prevent the hostile designs of France and England from assuming a form that would have compelled a declaration of war with them.

When we contemplate the enormous cost of this war, estimated by many at not less than \$4,000,000,000, we can form some idea of what the cost of a war with those nations would probably be. If we compare the cost of this war with the cost of our entire Navy, \$280,000,000, which includes its maintenance for four years, we find the latter is only one-fourteenth part of this outlay. And this will enable us to form some idea of the great economy of the Navy in a struggle like the present, when we compare the results it has accomplished with the cost of similar results when achieved by the Army. Nor has this \$280,000,000 all vanished in smoke and cannon-shot, in shoddy clothing or the commissary supplies that have been consumed; but it is to-day

existing in substantial ships-of-war that are defending our foreign commerce, blockading rebellious shores, or battering down the strongholds of treason and bidding defiance to unfriendly Powers. These six hundred and seventy-one vessels, at the low average of \$200,000 each, would represent a value of \$134,000,000, or nearly one-half of the entire outlay. The balance, \$150,000,000 in round numbers, will represent the cost of maintaining it for four years—an average of \$37,500,000 per annum.

The Government has been and is still paying bounties to volunteers for the Army at the rate of \$300 per man, and through the past three years local bounties have been paid in addition sufficient to average at least \$300 more. These local bounties, although not paid by the Government, are nevertheless paid by those who must be required to meet the interest on the public debt and provide for its ultimate liquidation; hence the whole amount of these bounties, say \$600 per man, come from the same fountain source, the people, and it is proper to estimate their total amount as part of the expenses of the war. But these bounties alone are but a small part of the cost of maintaining the Army, and yet the total bounties alone paid to the volunteers in one year for the Army would defray the entire expense of maintaining our splendid naval establishment for ten years. This, Mr. Speaker, is a fact well worth pondering over by the ablest statesmen. When war comes it involves the vast machinery of an army with its stupendous expenditures. Is it not the part of wisdom to put the probability of a foreign war as far beyond the regions of possibility as it is in the power of the nation to do when it can be done at a cost that is insignificant when compared with the cost of such a war—a cost that is as trifling when compared with the cost of war as is the premium we pay to the insurance company when compared with the loss we desire to be protected against? Such protection we gain by maintaining a Navy commensurate with the grandeur of the nation, and capable by the power and efficiency of its construction and organization to protect the honor and advance the interests of the Republic. If our Navy be preserved by such facilities for repairs and construction as are absolutely demanded, and its development properly fostered, we need not fear but that American genius and enterprise will be amply sufficient to keep it through all time where it is to-day—in advance of all the nations of the earth. But let us be admonished by the fable of the turtle and the hare, and not believe, because we are now so superior to our competitors that we can afford to slumber and not expect to find them in advance of us when we awake. By American genius we have taught the Old World the worthlessness of many of their theories, and they will doubtless draw wisdom from our experience and the rapid development of facts that are constantly manifesting themselves in this present struggle. Twelve million dollars' worth of Armstrong breech-loaders in Great Britain were demolished when one blow of a Yankee four hundred and fifty pounder struck the rebel

iron-clad Atlanta. And it needed but one American armored ship in Hampton Roads to show England that

“Ruined was her buckler and broken was her shield.”

Her boasted rule of the waves was as empty on that day as the command of her Danish king to those same waves a thousand years ago: “Thus far shalt thou come, and no further.” Of her one thousand and four war-vessels, but four remained to assert Britain's ocean supremacy. And the bombardment of Fort Sumter with the much abused monitors, if it did nothing more, taught our transatlantic neighbors that the new system, so much criticized and ridiculed in this Hall, was too invulnerable for their intermeddling to prove advantageous to them. That bombardment, if it did not capture Charleston, was so full of instruction to France and England that it saved us from an intervention, the result of which no statesman on this floor would dare to prophesy.

In the wonderfully rapid construction of our Navy the energies of the department have been taxed to the uttermost point through all its official ramifications; and the powers of the people, through the contract system, have been strained to their greatest capacity, and the consequence has been a wonderful development of resources and a remarkable degree of inventive talent and capacity for naval constructions. The result of all this is before the nation and the world in the form of a navy which has dealt the rebellion some of its worst wounds, and maintained the honor of the nation. It is now the most potent in the world; surpassing in all the elements of effectiveness that of France or England. It now controls more than twelve thousand miles of inland waters, giving confidence and support to our armies, which are seldom beyond the reverberation of its guns, and at the same time successfully scours the ocean in pursuit of Anglo-rebel pirates, and maintains a blockade which is the wonder of the world.

This truly gigantic work has been accomplished without ostentation, and with an economy which has even extorted praise from the hostile and mercenary press of England, and, as our investigating committees have shown, with less fraud and peculation than any other undertaken by the government. Notwithstanding the magnitude of the results that have been accomplished, the Navy Department has been repeatedly assailed in the most unjust and unreasonable manner, and its able chief ridiculed and caricatured until one would suppose that his principal occupation had been to pass his official hours in comfortably dozing in an easy arm-chair, especially provided for that purpose by himself at the department. Friend and foe to the Union have alike been led to believe that what was so persistently asserted by his defamers must be true.

Treason, in mistaken security, ridiculed the efforts of the old man of the sea to shut up a coast equal to one-seventh of the world's circumference, and made thrice difficult by the

rich fringe of islands, bays, peninsulas, sounds, and inlets bordering it from Cape Henry to the Rio Grande, and whose endless labyrinths gave friendly shelter to smugglers and pirates; but it has now awakened amid the terrors of starvation and the hopelessness of despair to see this stupendous work accomplished.

England, self-styled mistress of the seas, folded her snowy hands to rest when she saw the drowsy lids of the old Rip Van Winkle, but his Kearsarge guns in the British Channel have roused her from her pleasant slumbers. Winslow is crashing through British oak. Her trained gunners of the Excellent are struggling in the agonies of death, and Cherbourg bears witness to the petty larceny of the pirate's English consort—Britain's neutral Deerhound.

When the history of this war is written, Mr. Chairman, no prouder record of able administrative talent and comprehensive co-operation will gild its instructive pages than that which recites the management of the Navy Department during the last four years. The utmost efforts of ridicule and defamation have been exhausted in vain endeavors to weaken the confidence of the people and the President in the ability of its Secretary. From the moment of his installation this gentleman seems to have pursued, with a fixedness of purpose rarely witnessed, a policy having for its object the throttling of treason and the domination of the ocean. Calling at once to his council the ablest talent in the service, and confidently trusting his reputation to the keeping of the loyal people of the land; turning neither to the right hand nor to the left to defend himself from the scurrility and misrepresentation which have assailed him, he has devoted his talents and energies to the consummation of this grand object with the modesty which attends true

merit. Measured by the criterion of success, the only touchstone which a nation involved in a mighty struggle will trust in, the honorable Secretary has naught to fear. The stupendous work accomplished by the Navy, the soul-thrilling victories it has achieved, and the remarkable good fortune which has attended its undertakings during this rebellion, bear incontrovertible testimony to the statesmanship which has directed its operations, and stamp the administration of that Department as eminently successful.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I should like to record my profound admiration of the splendid gallantry and devoted patriotism that have been displayed by the naval heroes who have defended the honor of the national flag with a devotion and bravery which have won for them the admiration of the world. I have on several occasions, by my votes in this Hall, manifested my gratitude to these gallant officers and men who have done so much to defend our land from the curse of treason, and would now, if I felt that my humble powers were equal to so grand a theme, delight to dwell upon the glories with which they have enriched the story of these perilous times. But, Mr. Chairman,

“What skilful limner e'er would choose  
To paint the rainbow's varying hues,  
Unless to mortal it were given  
To dip his brush in tints of heaven?”

The brilliancy of those achievements will make history more attractive than romance. Poetry will draw from its absorbing record immortal themes to gild its graceful numbers, and many a youthful hero in the dim and far-off future will feel the first impulse of generous emulation while listening to the songs and tales which recite the deeds of Foote and Farragut.



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FRANCK TAYLOR,

*Washington City.*

