

HOW DEWEY BEAT THE BRITISH.

Exciting Sunset Gun Contest With the British Flagship Bellerophon. By W. W. STONE.

(Copyright, 1898, by the Author.) In 1866 George Dewey, then a lieutenant commander, was the executive officer of the staunch old frigate Colorado. I was his ship's writer and had opportunity of knowing him intimately and I shall never forget a most exciting contest which we had in the bay of Gibraltar with her majesty's flagship "Bellerophon," known in song and story as the "Billy Ruffian."

She was cried up to us by her men as the crack ship of the British navy. I do not say that she was; I am simply giving you an assertion made by the English boat's crew, coming alongside, bringing the English admiral on a visit. Mr. Dewey heard of this bragadoela in some way and determined to give the Englishmen a "run for their money." He knew well the English routine aboardship, having been with the Wabash on her European cruise in 1859, and he knew that the British seamen prided themselves more than anything else on the speed with which they could lower their sails and flag.

At sunset, chronometer time, the American flag comes down to the music of drum and fife; at the same time the word of command is given and the masts and yards lower their perch and are lowered to the deck. In the British navy the sunset gun is fired at actual time, or was so then, and the flag was lowered as the snars came down. Shortly before sunset Mr. Dewey walked up to the bridge, aft of the quarter deck, and took the trumpet from the officer of the deck. Soon after Admiral Goldsborough, Commander Steadman and Captain Wyman joined him.

At the usual time our old flag fluttered for a moment at the gaff and then descended like a bird of paradise upon the afterdeck. Not a word, however, came from Mr. Dewey. Every eye was turned through at the English frigate, waiting for her signal gun. The men were all at their stations, quivering with suppressed excitement. Had we been waiting with shotguns for the signal to commence a life and death struggle for the mastery of the port there could have been no greater tension.

Suddenly the sunset gun boomed out from the "Bellerophon" and her royal yards swung to a perpendicular. "Away there, you men!" came through the speaking trumpet like a sharp clap of thunder.

Down with the sails! No one now paid any attention to the British ship; the men bent every energy to the task before them; the topmasts went up far enough to slip out the underpinning; then down, slowly but surely, came masts and yards at the same time. This was a very perilous undertaking. The immense pieces of timber, eight inches through at the butt, are held in their places by stout iron bands, strong enough to bind the big sticks while perfectly perpendicular, but powerless had the enormous piles tilted to one side. Each was, however, guided by strong and steady arms and down they came with the yards still hanging alongside.

A single misstep, a tilt of the ship, a parting of a strand and the ponderous mass might have plunged through the ship's bottom. In less time than I have taken to tell of the feat the old ship was stripped, her stumpy looking lower masts standing alone and making her look like a shapely wreck.

We now looked for the first time over to the Englishman. We were amazed. His yards were not yet on deck, although his seamen were working for dear life. We could not help setting up a cheer. "What's your hurry, Dewey?" called Goldsborough, quizzically. The ponderous old admiral had been as eager as the rest of us to give the "lime-juicer" a lesson in ship maneuvering, but he couldn't help playfully twitting our executive on this willful waste of good powder.

"No hurry, sir; no hurry at all," answered Dewey, with a loss of the head; "just our usual practice drill."

We stayed in the Straits of Gibraltar a week or two after this but we never heard another word from "Billy Ruffians" about a their famed seamanship.

hands, when some one, to break the spell, which was becoming a little tense, asked: "Well, was that a case of special providence?"

STORY OF JOHN BROWN.

Preached and Practiced the Doctrine of Non-Resistance. Colonel Swain of Chicago is responsible for a story of the prehistoric days of John Brown.

"You may not know it," said the colonel, "but up to middle life John Brown preached and practiced the gospel of non-resistance. A justice of the peace of western New York told me of an experience he had with him during this period. Mr. Brown was then occupied in raising sheep in New York state and had imported some particularly fine breeds.

"After a time Mr. Brown noticed rather frequent disappearances of his best stock and at the same time discovered that one of his neighbors, a well-to-do man, was dining pretty constantly off mutton. Feeling morally certain of the fact of his lost sheep, he wrote to his neighbor to the effect that the merinos he had from time to time taken were worth \$100 apiece and therefore too valuable for eating purposes, but that if he would call at Mr. Brown's house he would be given sheep that would cut up into just as good mutton shops as the merinos.

"The neighbor, instead of politely thanking Mr. Brown for his offer, seized the first opportunity that presented itself for striking him with his horsewhip. But John, faithful to his doctrine of non-resistance, only turned the other cheek and was duly lashed. However, the next day he had his neighbor arrested for assault. But the justice of the peace refused to punish the defendant, on the ground that if a man makes no effort at self-defense after the

superstition, a hero as bold as Launcelot, as spotless as Galahad.

FRATILE OF THE YOUNGSTERS.

"My mamma's got a nice new fan," said little Ethel. "Well, what of that?" replied Margie. "My mamma's got half a dozen fans."

"I'm glad to see you take an interest in the dear little birds, children. Can any one tell me what this one is? I see Katie Upjohn's hand is up. What is it, Katie?"

"Willie Jones, how many pounds make a ton?" "All depends, ma'am, on the stuff. A ton of coal, for instance, weighs in the neighborhood of 2,000 pounds, pa says; and I saw in a newspaper the other day that a ton of gold is about \$120,000."

"I've called you three times, Charlie," said a mother to her little son, "and I'm very much annoyed because of your failure to answer me."

"Well, mamma," replied Charlie, who was very fond of reading bible stories, "you ain't any better than the Lord, are you?"

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rhymes that the boy did for whistling in school: "I didn't whistle, sir; it whistled itself."

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No, of course not, answered the mother in surprise. Why did you ask that question of the body, Hair or Eyebrows falling out, it is this secondary

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