

STORIES OF SCHLEY.

INCIDENTS WHICH REVEAL THE MAN'S GOOD CHARACTER.

He is a Horn Fighter of Southern Stock But He Stood by the Flag When It Came to the Parting of the Ways in 1861—His First Brief Command of a Ship.

"I do not send my men where I will not go myself."

It was Commodore Winfield Scott Schley who said this. He was then commander of the New York and stood on the forward bridge of his ship, outward bound from one of the ports of the Atlantic seaboard. Ten minutes before a badly frightened man had run up to him, calling out:

"Captain, the forward port magazine is on fire."

"Then shut your mouth," said the captain. The man, thus recalled to his senses, touched his cap and relapsed into silence, while his commander quietly ordered a fire drill, and a moment later commanded the flooding of the magazine. Both orders, a part of the daily routine on every American warship, were promptly carried out, but it was not until all danger was past that the officers and men obtained knowledge of the true state of affairs. When they did find out they realized that their captain had been standing all the time just over the bridge and let him take his place. It was then that the captain made the remark quoted above. His course in front of Santiago later proves that he is always as good as his word.

The story of Commander Schley is the story of a man who did, and one good for patriot ears. In one of the closing days of April, 1861, the sloop of war Niagara, returning from a long foreign cruise, sighted Minsto Ledge light off Boston Harbor. Half an hour later a pilot came aboard, and making his way to the quarter deck, saluted the commander, Capt. McKean, who put the usual query:

"Well, pilot, what's the news?"

"Sumter's been fired on," was the reply, "and the United States has gone to—"

Slowly the listening officers fell back and instinctively made two groups—the North and South, but the captain, with a steady voice said:

"Mr. Pilot put us into Boston as soon as you can."

Then lifting his hat he added:

"The flag's servants and yours, gentlemen," and went to his cabin. Late that night the anchor chains hurrying through the hawser holes chanted "Home Again." Early next morning all the officers were called together and Capt. McKean said:

"Gentlemen we have come to the parting of the ways. Some of us will never meet again, and some of us will die in doing what we believe is right. The government has educated, fed and clothed us and we have sworn to stand by it, but no oath can bind a man beyond the strength of his conscience and changed conditions make changed men. On that table I have written out the old oath of allegiance and signed it. For my part,"—they buried him years ago in an admiral's uniform—"I stand by the flag. Let each one of you go to his cabin and think it over; then let him come back here and sign below me—or let him go his way."

So saying, he went on deck, while one by one the officers came back until nine names stood under that of their commander; the rest were going the other way. At the end of an hour the captain returned to his cabin and took the paper in his hand. As he did so, he looked up and saw before him a tall, young midshipman from Maryland.

"Do you sign, Winnie?" asked the old man with a perceptible tremor in his voice.

"Aye, aye, sir. Same flag and same Uncle Sam in Massachusetts as in Maryland, you know."

"God bless you, boy. Your father and I fought side by side, as lads in the war of 1812, and while there are some of us who are going away, I prayed God your father's son would stick to us."

Commodore Schley had been five years in the navy when he took this resolution to stand by the flag—a resolution which saved to the service as alert, dashing and accomplished an officer as ever reached flag rank. Born near Frederick, Md., in 1839, he came from a line of sailors, his father having achieved distinction as a naval officer in the war with Mexico. Appointed acting midshipman in 1856, he was graduated at the naval academy in 1860, and made his first cruise on the Niagara. He was promoted to be master in May, 1861, and went with the Niagara to the blockade off Charleston, whence being already a thorough seaman, he was sent by Capt. McKean as master of the first prize taken by the navy in the war between the states. It was a British cotton ship, the General Parkhill.

On July 18, 1862, Commodore Schley received his commission as lieutenant, and with it an assignment as executive officer, to the gunboat Owaseco of the west Gulf squadron. It was while serving on the Owaseco that he got his first command, and the story of how it came to him is too good a one to be left untold. The Owaseco was stationed off Mobile and was one of the small squadrons commanded by Capt. James Alden, of the Richmond. Her captain, dead long since, was over fond of his cups, and at frequent periods had to retire to his cabin for a week's repairs.

One day a quartermaster of the Richmond reported to Capt. Alden that the captain's gig of the Owaseco was approaching, with the captain's pen-

nant flying. Supposing his visitor to be the captain of the Owaseco, Alden put on his uniform coat, the side boys were ordered and the boatswain's mate made ready for his three pipes at the gangway. But when the Owaseco's gig came alongside the man who sprang up the ladder was Lieut. Schley.

"I expected to see Capt. Jones"—that was not his name—"of the Owaseco," said Alden, with slight sarcasm. "I am commander of the Owaseco, sir," was Schley's matter of fact reply.

"Since when?" asked Alden.

"An hour ago, sir," said Schley.

"Where is Capt. Jones?"

"Locked up in his cabin, sir, drunk."

"Who locked him in?"

"I did. I first put him under arrest and then shut him up in his cabin. Then I took command of the ship, and here I am to report for orders."

A broad smile crept over Alden's face, but instantly assuming an air of severity, he said:

"Well, the first order I'll give you is for you to lower that pennant in the gig; go back to your ship; unlock that cabin door and restore Capt. Jones to duty. Then report to me in writing if the captain's illness still incapacitates him and I will know what to do. Don't be in too great a hurry to get command of a ship, Mr. Schley."

As a matter of fact, Commodore Schley did not get command of a ship until several years later, but before he did, he had fairly earned it. He served gallantly in all the engagements which led up to the capture of Port Hudson, and for his part in cutting out, under heavy fire, two schooners engaged in supplying the Confederates, he was honorably mentioned in special orders. From 1864 till 1866 he was attached to the Wateree as executive officer, and served with her on the Pacific station. In 1864 he helped to suppress a revolt of Chinese coolies in the Middle Cincha Islands, and a year later he landed at La Union, San Salvador with 100 men to protect American interests imperiled by revolution.

Commodore Schley was promoted to be lieutenant commander in July, 1866, and during the following three years was on duty at Annapolis. His next post was on the Benicia of the Asiatic squadron, with which he participated in the attack upon and overthrow of the forces defending the forts on the Salee river in Korea. This was in 1871, and a year later he returned to the United States and became the head of the department of modern languages at the navy academy. Commissioned commodore in 1874, he was for five years on the North and South Atlantic stations and the western coast of Africa. When the Greely relief expedition was organized he was called from duty with the lighthouse board and placed in command of it, again proving himself the right man in the right place by snatching Lieutenant Greely and his comrades from the clutches of death and conveying them safely to their homes.

For this service Commodore Schley was awarded a gold medal by congress and promoted by President Arthur to be chief of the bureau of equipment and repairs, which position he held until 1888. While holding this post he was made captain. When the cruiser Baltimore was put in commission he was assigned to command her, and carried back to Sweden the remains of John Ericsson, inventor of the Monitor, for which service the king of Sweden presented him with a gold medal. He was in command of the Baltimore at Valparaiso, Chili, in 1891, when a number of American sailors were attacked and some of them done to death by a mob. The complications between the United States and Chili which arose from this affair were disposed of by him in a manner that earned the express gratitude of the navy department. One incident of the affair, however, never found its way into the naval records. Let me tell the story as Commodore Schley told it only a few weeks ago.

"It was 6 o'clock," said he, "when the men left the ship, and it was only 10 when I received the news of what had happened. Suddenly attacked from the rear, they were cut down before they could defend themselves. It almost broke my heart to see them brought back in such sorry condition, but we gave them the best of care. There was one Jackie, a faithful sturdy fellow, who had been with me before. He was in a sad plight and as I went to him he said to me:

"Captain, I guess I'm done for. I hate going this way, from a blow in the dark from a sneaking heathen; but it's the last voyage I'll make with you."

"I could not stand that," I told him that he was not serious—hurt, and that the doctor had said he would come out all right.

"Did the doctor say that?" asked the man, eagerly.

"To be sure he did," said I. "This was a bold face lie, but I am sure the Lord has forgiven it because of the good it did. I told the surgeon, and he seconded me in my efforts to encourage the man. I used to go twice a day to that man and stay an hour at a time, telling him what we would do when he got well. And he did get well. The surgeon says I pulled him back to life; perhaps I did, for I couldn't bear to think of such a splendid fellow so near to death by a blow in the dark from a hulking coward who did not dare to take the consequences of a fair standup fight."

What I have written, says R. R. Wilson, of Commodore Schley has missed its purpose if it has failed to portray him as a Yankee sailor of the best type. Cool, intrepid, brave, clear headed and sound in judgment, he is an officer of whom any navy might well be proud.

Having decided that it was his duty to pay his respects, the gallant Captain forgot about the hundred guns still thundering from the forts. Twenty seamen manned a barge and, accompanied by Flag Lieutenant Trenchard, he was rowed across the shot-swept river. As they approached the English flagship a Chinese shot struck one of the oars, crashed through the boat, and tore its way out below the water line. Flying splinters mortally wounded Coxswain Hart and injured the Flag Lieutenant. The crew scrambled from the sinking barge and were dragged aboard the gunboat. Here they beheld a terrible scene of carnage. More than half the gunners lay dead and the decks were slippery with blood. While Captain Tattall paid his respects to the British Admiral the American seamen, quite contrary to orders, sprang to the British guns, ramméd home the shells, and the flagship spoke again to the enemy's fort. The exhausted gunners set up a wild cheer of approval and with renewed hope worked side by side with the Americans.

The Toey-wan now returned to the task of bringing up the British reserve, continuing far into the night. At 8 o'clock a storming party of 600 marines were landed on the muddy shore. They waded three terrible trenches sown with caltrops and cheered half way up the embankment in the face of a murderous fire of jingals and Minie balls. Hours later 400 of them came struggling back, a full third of the force having been killed or wounded.

Again the American ship came to the rescue. It gathered up the maimed, mangled and muddy bodies of the English marines and with its own dead coxswain dropped back across the bar in the gray of the early morning. In the meantime Captain Tattall had sent Lieutenant Johnson with the Powhatan to the aid of the British ships outside the bar, and all night of the 26th he served under the union jack, carrying the defeated marines and wounded seamen to places of safety.

Of 1,350 men of the allied fleets who went into action 450 were killed and wounded, including 29 officers. In the course of the battle the British Admiral shifted his flag no fewer than three times.

Captain Tattall's act was a distinct violation of neutrality, but the American people received him on his return from China with honors such as have seldom fallen to an officer of his rank. Later he was formally thanked by the English Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the name of her Majesty and by the Lords Commissioners of the British Admiralty.

His Ship His Sweetheart.

The word "ship" is masculine in French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, and possesses no sex in Teutonic and Scandinavian. Perhaps it would not be an error to trace the custom back to the Greeks, who called all ships by feminine names, probably out of deference to Athene, goddess of the sea. But the sailor assigns no such reasons. The ship is to him a veritable sweetheart. She possesses a waist, collars, stays, laces, bonnets, ties, ribbons, chains, watches and dozens of other feminine valuables.

Everybody Warned.

An Arizona rancher has posted the following notice on a cottonwood tree near his place: "My wife Sarah has left my ranch when I didn't Doo a Thing Too her and I want it distinctly understood that any Man as takes her in and Keers for her on my account will get himself Pumped so Full of Led that some tenderfoot will locate him for a mineral claim. A word to the wise is sufficient and orter work on fools."

An Old University.

The oldest university in the world is at Peking. It is called the "School for the Sons of the Empire." Its antiquity is very great, and a granite register, consisting of stone columns, 329 in number, contains the names of 60,000 graduates.

To Burn Coke.

Coke can be burned in ordinary fireplaces by means of a new attachment, consisting of a perforated conical, hollow block, to be placed in the grate bottom and connected with exterior draught pipes to supply air to the interior of the mass of burning fuel.

Earrings Not in Favor.

Among the Phoenicians the wearing of earrings was a badge of servitude, the same custom obtaining with the Hebrews. The latter people said when Eve was expelled from paradise her ears were bored as a sign of slavery.

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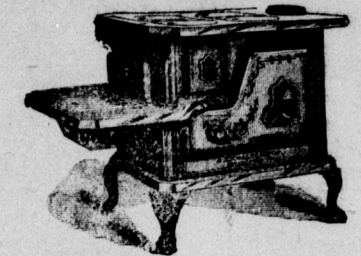
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