

REPORT

OF

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *December 4, 1841.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report :

The navy of the United States is composed of—

Eleven ships of the line ; of which one is rated for 120 guns, and ten for 74 guns.

Fifteen frigates of the first class ; of which one is rated for 54 guns, and fourteen for 44 guns.

Two frigates of the second class, of 36 guns each.

Eighteen sloops of war ; of which eleven are rated for 20 guns, two for 18 guns, and five for 16 guns.

Two brigs and four schooners, rated for 10 guns each.

Four steamers ; beside—

Three store-ships, three vessels used as receiving vessels, and five small schooners.

At the date of the last annual report from this Department, the ships in commission were employed as follows :

In the Mediterranean, the *Ohio*, of 74 guns, Captain Lavallette ; the *Brandywine*, of 44 guns, Captain Bolton ; and the *Cyane*, of 20 guns, Commander Percival, who was relieved on account of ill health, and succeeded by Commander Latimer ; the whole squadron under the command of Commodore Hull. The *Cyane* was relieved by the sloop of war *Preble*, Commander Voorhees, and returned to the United States in May last, her cruise having been performed. The *Ohio* returned on the 17th of July last, and the *Brandywine* on the 9th of May last. The return of the *Brandywine* was owing to particular causes, not connected with the original purposes of her cruise ; and, as her presence in the Mediterranean was important, she was ordered back, under the command of Captain Geisinger. In July last, the sloop of war *Fairfield*, Commander Tattnell, sailed for the Mediterranean, taking out Commodore Charles W. Morgan, who now commands the squadron on that station. The squadron consists at present of the *Brandywine*, *Fairfield*, and *Preble*. The honor of the flag, in its intercourse with those of other nations, appears to have been properly sustained by this squadron ; a due support and countenance have been afforded to our mercantile interest ; and the amicable relations of our country with foreign nations have been respected and preserved.

In the Pacific ocean, the frigate *Constitution*, Captain Turner ; the sloop of war *St. Louis*, Commander French Forrest ; the sloop of war *Yorktown*, Commander Aulick ; the sloop of war *Dale*, Commander Gaunt ; and the schooner *Shark*, Lieutenant Bigelow ; the whole under the command of

Commodore Alexander Claxton. Commodore Claxton died at Talcahuana in March last, to the great loss of the service, and the just regret of the country. Upon that event, the chief command of the squadron devolved on Captain Daniel Turner, who returned to the United States with the *Constitution* on the 31st of October last, the time of her cruise having expired. Commodore Thomas Ap C. Jones, having been appointed to the command of that station, will sail in the frigate *United States* in the course of the next fortnight. The sloop of war *Cyane*, Commander Ströling, sailed for the same station early in November. Upon the arrival of Commodore Jones, the squadron in the Pacific will consist of the frigate *United States*, the sloops of war *St. Louis*, *Yorktown*, *Cyane*, and *Dale*, and the schooner *Shark*.

Orders were given to Commodore Claxton to employ one of his vessels in cruising in the gulf of California and along the northwest coast of America, and, if circumstances should permit, to despatch another to visit the Sandwich and Friendly islands, in order to afford protection and assistance to our citizens engaged in the whale fisheries. In obedience to this order, the sloop of war *St. Louis*, Commander French Forrest, was ordered to cruise in the gulf and along the western coast of California. This duty was performed in a manner highly creditable to Commander Forrest. The atrocities committed on American and English residents at Monterey and its neighborhood, by the Mexican authorities, are well known. Under the unfounded pretence of a conspiracy among the foreigners to wrest the country from Mexico, and to set up a separate and independent Government of their own, they were attacked by armed soldiers in the night, wounded, beaten, imprisoned, sent in chains to a distant place, and their property destroyed, without even the forms of trial. In the midst of these outrages, Commander Forrest arrived upon the coast, and, by his prompt and spirited interposition, vindicated and secured the rights, not only of American citizens, but of British subjects resident in Upper California. For these services, Commander Forrest received, and appears to have well deserved, a formal expression of the thanks both of American and English residents.

In consequence of the civil disturbances in Upper Peru, it was deemed proper to despatch the *Shark*, under the command of Lieutenant A. Bigelow, to cruise upon that coast. The movement was judicious and well-timed; and the delicate trust reposed in Lieutenant Bigelow was discharged in a manner highly satisfactory to this Department. The property of American citizens, exposed to the rapacity and lawless violence of contending factions in the midst of civil war, was effectually protected, while all who witnessed the operations of the *Shark* were inspired with increased respect for the American flag. It is highly gratifying to observe, that Lieutenant Bigelow, as well as Commander Forrest, extended the protection of our flag to the citizens and subjects of other countries, as well as to those of our own.

In further execution of the orders of the Department, the sloop of war *Yorktown*, Commander Aulick, was despatched in May last to the Sandwich and Friendly islands, with a view to render such assistance as might be necessary to our whale-fishers and other citizens trading in that part of the Pacific. No intelligence has been received from her since she left Valparaiso.

The conduct of this squadron, as well under the command of Commodore Claxton as under that of Captain Turner, has been highly satisfactory

to the Department. No disorder nor failure in duty has yet been reported to me calling for my censure or disapprobation. On the contrary, the strictest regard appears to have been paid to the honor of the flag, and to the duties which it owed to the country and its citizens. Captain Turner very properly availed himself of an opportunity to show respect to a friendly Power, by receiving on board the Constitution at Callao, and conveying to Rio, the Brazilian charge d'affaires. For this act of courtesy he received the thanks of the Imperial Government.

I would respectfully solicit your attention, in a particular manner, to the situation of American interests in the Pacific ocean. According to an estimate made by an intelligent gentleman lately returned from the Pacific, there are at this time not less than forty millions of dollars engaged in the whale-fisheries alone, of which a greater part is American. I have great confidence in the accuracy of this estimate; but, even if it be too large, there will remain, after all reasonable deductions, an interest of vast magnitude and importance. American merchants have formed establishments in different parts of the coast, from Chili to Columbia river—some of them very extensive and important, and all of them worthy the attention of Government. In Upper California there are already considerable settlements of Americans, and others are daily resorting to that fertile and delightful region. Such, however, is the unsettled condition of that whole country, that they cannot be safe, either in their persons or property, except under the protection of our naval power. This protection cannot be afforded in proper degree, and with suitable promptness, by so small a squadron as we have usually kept in that sea. To cruise along so extensive a coast, calling at all necessary points, and at the same time to visit those parts of the Pacific in which the presence of our ships is necessary for the protection and assistance of our whale-fisheries, requires twice the number of vessels now employed in that service. It is highly desirable, too, that the Gulf of California should be fully explored; and this duty alone will give employment for a long time to one or two vessels of the smallest class. For these reasons, I have caused estimates to be prepared for a large increase of the Pacific squadron.

I also respectfully submit to your consideration the propriety of establishing, at some suitable point on our territory bordering that ocean, a post to which our vessels may resort. Many positions well adapted to this object may be found between the mouth of Columbia river and Guayaquil, which it is presumed may be procured, if they be not to be found on our own territory. Our public vessels cruising in that ocean are generally absent from the United States not less than four years; within which time they necessarily require a variety of supplies which cannot now be obtained without very great difficulty and expense. Any considerable *repair* is almost impossible, with all the means which can be furnished by all the nations of the coast. Such a post would also be of incalculable value as a place of refuge and refreshment to our commercial marine. I need not enlarge on the many and great benefits which might be expected from the establishment of some general rendezvous for all our vessels trading and cruising in this distant sea.

In addition to this, a naval depot at the Sandwich islands would be of very great advantage. It is a central point of the trade carried on in the Pacific, and possesses many peculiar recommendations of climate, and local conveniences, and accommodations.

On the coast of Brazil, the frigate *Potomac*, of 44 guns, Captain Storer; the sloop of war *Concord*, Commander Boerum; *Marion*, Commander Belt; *Decatur*, Commander Ogden; and schooner *Enterprise*, Lieutenant Goldsborough; all under the command of Commodore Charles G. Ridgely.

Commodore Ridgely, having desired to be relieved, in consequence of ill health, and having been informed that his successor would soon leave the United States, returned home in the *Constitution*, leaving the squadron under the command of Captain Storer. This was in nowise injurious to the service; and the reasons assigned by Commodore Ridgely for his return before the arrival of his successor are altogether satisfactory to the Department. On the 1st of November, the *Delaware*, of 74 guns, Captain C. S. McCauley, having on board Commodore Charles Morris, left Hampton Roads for this station. On her arrival, the squadron will consist of the *Delaware*, *Potomac*, *Concord*, *Marion*, *Decatur*, and *Enterprise*; all under the command of Commodore Morris.

Nothing of particular interest has occurred in the operations of this squadron. The friendly relations of our country with the Governments of the coast have been strictly maintained, and the rights of our citizens have been duly respected by the local authorities.

In the West Indies, the *Macedonian*, of thirty-six guns, Commodore Jesse Wilkinson; the sloop of war *Levant*, Commander Fitzhugh, and *Warren*, Commander Jamesson. This squadron was ordered to return to the United States, to avoid the hurricane season in the West Indies, and is still here. The sloop of war *Vandalia*, Commander Ramsay, will take the place of the *Levant*, and the whole squadron will be ordered back to its station as soon as the vessels can be supplied with crews.

In the East Indies, the frigate *Constellation*, of thirty-six guns, Commodore Laurence Kearny, and sloop of war *Boston*, Commander Long, all under the command of Commodore Kearny. The latest despatches from this squadron are dated at sea, off the Cape of Good Hope, 31st July, 1841. At that time the officers and crews of both vessels were in good health, and they were making the best of their way to the place of their destination.

The exploring squadron, under the command of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, consists of the sloop of war *Vincennes*, commanded by that officer; the *Peacock*, Lieutenant Hudson; the brig *Porpoise*, Lieutenant Ringgold; and the schooner *Flying Fish*, as a tender to the squadron.

Intelligence down to the 6th of April, 1849, has been communicated in previous reports from this Department. At that time the squadron was in New Zealand. In further prosecution of his cruise, Lieutenant Wilkes visited the Fejee islands, and succeeded in establishing useful regulations of trade and intercourse with some of the principal chiefs. His surveys of this group were prosecuted with great care and industry, and have served to ascertain the positions of a large number of dangerous reefs, and to indicate many secure and convenient harbors. This will be of great value to our citizens trading with that group, and particularly to the whalers. In many of the harbors, in which hitherto it was considered too dangerous to enter, whales abound, although very few are to be found in the neighboring sea.

The melancholy tragedy, which has already been announced in the public journals, was enacted at this group. Lieutenant Joseph A. Underwood

and Midshipman Wilkes Henry, while engaged in surveying, were treacherously assailed by the natives, and, after a brave but ineffectual resistance, were murdered, before it was possible to relieve them. Their bodies were rescued and properly interred, and Lieutenant Wilkes inflicted on the offending savages a severe chastisement, which will probably deter them from similar outrages in future. He was also fortunate enough to capture a noted chief, who instigated the massacre of a greater part of the crew of the brig Charles Dagget, of Salem, in 1834. This chief he proposes to bring to the United States, to be dealt with as the Government shall direct.

At the last dates (24th November, 1840), the squadron was at the Sandwich islands, undergoing repairs. It was the intention of Lieut. Wilkes to visit the northwest coast of America, and to return to the United States early in the summer of 1842.

A squadron of small schooners, under the command of Lieutenant John T. McLaughlin, has for some time been co-operating with the army in Florida. This force has been increased, since the last annual report from this department, by the addition of three revenue-cutters, placed under the direction of the Department for that purpose, by the Secretary of the Treasury, and a new schooner built under the direction of the War Department. The whole force now consists of seven schooners.

Important assistance has been rendered by this little squadron in the military operations in Florida. It has furnished the means of penetrating the interior of the country and attacking the enemy in his fastnesses. Lieutenant McLaughlin has manifested great bravery, energy, and zeal, and much credit is due to him, and to the force under his command, for the handsome manner in which they have acquitted themselves.

In obedience to the act of July, 1840, the brig Consort, under the command of Lieutenant Powell, has been diligently engaged in the survey of the coast, from the bay of Appalachicola to the mouth of the Mississippi. This survey was completed in June last, and Lieutenant Powell has since been engaged in the survey of the South shoals of Nantucket.

The brig Dolphin, Commander Bell, and schooner Grampus, Lieutenant Paine, returned, the former in May, and the latter in August last, from their second cruise on the coast of Africa. These vessels have been actively and efficiently engaged in the suppression of the slave-trade, and in the protection of our citizens engaged in commerce on that coast. I regret to say that their officers and crews have suffered severely from the diseases of the climate; and it is owing, in a great degree, to the constant vigilance and prudent precautions of the commanders that their sufferings were not still greater. Notwithstanding the extreme sickliness of the climate, it is impossible to dispense with a squadron on that coast. In addition to the interesting duty of suppressing the slave-trade, which could not be otherwise effected, the lawful commerce of our citizens with all parts of the coast is rapidly increasing, and already employs a very large capital. This trade is an object of so much importance, and is contended for in so strong a spirit of rivalry by traders of different countries, that the presence of national vessels is absolutely necessary to protect them in their just rights, and to prevent those outrages, unfriendly to the harmony of nations, to which men are often driven by the thirst of gain. It is also worthy of consideration that the presence of our public vessels is of great importance to our colonists, by giving them consequence in the eyes of the neighboring native tribes. These views give great interest to this squadron, and render it desirable that it should be placed

upon the most effective footing. Many additional precautions, however, are necessary, in order to protect the crews from the fatal diseases of the climate, and thus to enable the squadron properly to discharge its duties. I have taken measures to obtain the requisite information upon this point, and hope to be able to avail myself of it when a new squadron shall be appointed to that service.

The operations of these vessels have been highly valuable in protecting the rights of our citizens engaged in trade, and in preventing the traffic in slaves. They have performed all that could have been reasonably expected of so small a force. An additional number of vessels, some of which should be of larger size, will undoubtedly be necessary for the security of our increasing trade in that quarter, and for the effectual suppression of the slave-trade. This trade, I regret to say, is still carried on to a considerable extent, notwithstanding the vigilance of our cruisers, aided by the active co-operation of those of England.

Representations having been made to the Department of an act of unlawful violence committed against American citizens on the coast of New Grenada, the brig *Dolphin*, under the command of Lieutenant McKean, was despatched to that quarter in September last, with such instructions as were deemed necessary to redress the wrong, and to guard against the commission of similar outrages in future. Intelligence has been received as late as 15th October, at which time she had reached her place of destination. The particular outrage complained of was not committed upon an American vessel; but the presence of the *Dolphin* was nevertheless considered by our consular agent highly advantageous to American interests in the then disturbed state of the country.

The steamships *Missouri* and *Mississippi*, built under the act of 3d March, 1839, the former at New York, and the latter at Philadelphia, are nearly ready for service, and will form a part of the home squadron.

Orders have been given for the construction of three steamers of medium size, under the act of 3d March, 1841, one at New York, one at Philadelphia, and one at Norfolk. In addition to these, Captain R. F. Stockton is superintending the construction, at Philadelphia, of a steamer of 600 tons, to be propelled by Ericsson's propeller; and Lieutenant W. W. Hunter is engaged in like manner at Norfolk with one of 300 tons, to be propelled by submerged water-wheels, invented by himself. Very valuable results are anticipated from these experiments.

Orders have been given to build a first-class sloop and three small vessels of war, and to finish the frigates *Cumberland*, *Savannah*, *Raritan*, and *St. Lawrence*.

The balance in the Treasury to the credit of the navy hospital fund is \$217,907 53. This fund is gradually increasing, from the assessment of 20 cents per month upon the pay of officers, seamen, and marines, so that a continuing surplus may be expected. I recommend that authority be given to invest these surpluses, as they accrue, in some interest-bearing fund. So much of its annual increase as may not be needed for the particular purposes of the fund may be advantageously applied, in other forms, to the comfort of our seamen. The average annual increase of this fund from the 1st January, 1836, has been \$27,223 67; which, if it had been invested in 6 per cent. stock, would have added to the amount \$57,482 04 on the 1st of January next.

Of the appropriation for the "suppression of the slave-trade," there

remains unexpended the sum of \$4,365 14, which has been carried to the surplus fund. I recommend that it be reappropriated, and the further sum of \$3,000 be added, in order to meet outstanding liabilities of this fund.

Under the head of "contingencies not enumerated" there remains, of the appropriations of the last three years, the sum of \$9,246 76; of which \$3,246 76 will be carried to the surplus fund on the 1st of January next, if not previously applied to the proper purposes of the fund.

For the condition of the "navy pension fund," I respectfully refer you to the annexed report of the Commissioner of Pensions.

The operation of the apprentice system continues to be highly encouraging. Complaints are occasionally made that the pledges of the Government are not redeemed, but no sufficient evidence has yet reached the Department of the existence of any serious abuse. Great interest is felt in the success of this experiment, and every effort is used to secure to the apprentices all the benefits and advantages promised by the terms of enlistment. The vigilance of the Department will be constantly exerted to guard against all abuses, and to introduce into the system every practicable improvement. The number of apprentices now enlisted is about 1,000. This is not so favorable a result as might have been expected. An extension of the system is contemplated, so as to give to boys in the interior of the country an opportunity to join the service, without subjecting them to the expense of a journey to the rendezvous on the seaboard.

Great difficulty is experienced in the enlistment of seamen. To what cause this should be attributed I am unable to say; and, consequently, I am not prepared to suggest any remedy. It is, however, probably true, that the *mere seaman* is of too little consideration in the general estimate of the service. Laws and regulations securing to him the enjoyment of his just rights, liberal wages punctually paid, and a strict application, if not an extension, of the benevolent policy which provides for him or his family when he is disabled or killed in the service, would probably secure for our ships of war the preference in most cases over those of the merchant service.

Experiments in gunnery and projectiles, which have been conducted for several successive seasons, under the direction of Captain M. C. Perry, in the vicinity of New York, have been continued on board the United States steamer *Fulton*, Captain John T. Newton, but under the general control of Captain Perry. In testing a gun in the usual mode, it unfortunately burst, killing several men and wounding others. I have caused the subject to be investigated by a court of inquiry, whose finding shows that, however distressing and deplorable the accident may have been, no just censure can be attached to the officers who conducted the experiment.

Measures have been adopted, and are now in process of execution, for supplying the navy with the requisite guns. Less progress has been made than was desirable, because of the great pains which have been taken to obtain the *best* guns which could be procured in the country. In a short time they will be furnished of the various descriptions used in the service, including the Paixhan guns.

Under the appropriation of the last session, for the purpose of "making experiments to test the value of improvements in ordnance, in the construction of steamers and other vessels of war, and *in other matters connected with the naval service and the national defence*," nothing has yet been actually paid. Some experiments, however, have already been authorized, and others are now under the consideration of the Department, from which

very beneficial results are confidently anticipated. It is not proper, however, to make them public at this time. So many scientific and practical men throughout the country are now turning their attention to this subject that we may reasonably expect great advantages from a judicious use of this appropriation.

I have, under your directions, taken measures for the construction of a steamer on Lake Erie, in compliance with the act of 9th September, 1841.

I regret to say that the measures which have been adopted for the preservation of live-oak and red cedar timber, under existing laws, have not been attended with the desired results. Whether this is owing to the inefficiency in the laws themselves, or to want of due vigilance and fidelity in the agents employed, I am unable to say; but I have the most conclusive evidence that the timber is daily taken in large quantities from the public lands, without authority and contrary to law. This is a serious mischief, and one which calls for prompt remedy. It is confidently believed that the agencies now authorized by law will not answer the purpose. The lawless bands who are engaged in these depredations pay no respect to the unsupported authority of the agents; and, as it is almost impossible to bring them to justice through the ordinary forms of trial, they are left to plunder unrestrained. The presence of a military force, charged with that especial duty, is believed to be absolutely necessary to preserve this most valuable timber. A very small force would answer the purpose. A single steamboat, with her ordinary crew and a few marines, under the command of an active and judicious navy officer, would be able to pass rapidly from point to point, and extend full protection to every timber district which is accessible by water. The co-operation of revenue-cutters might be afforded, if required. This would be at once the most effectual and the *cheapest* expedient. Agents might still be employed to watch the interior districts, and to give notice of all trespasses committed on them. Power should be given to arrest offenders, and to bring them before the proper tribunals for trial. The penalties and forfeitures prescribed by the acts of 1817 and 1831 are supposed to be sufficiently severe; the only difficulty now is to detect offenders and bring them to justice. Additional legislation, also, is probably necessary, to define accurately the limits of the reserved districts, and to prevent all interference with private rights. The whole subject is respectfully submitted as one which claims the early and serious attention of Congress.

Every effort has been made, in compliance with the law, to obtain water-rotted American hemp for the use of the navy, but hitherto without success. One contract has been made, but the contractor has been unable to comply with its terms. We are, therefore, for the present, thrown upon our former resources for a supply of this article, but I shall continue to use all possible exertions to carry out the wise policy of Congress upon this point.

That *reform* is necessary, in every part of our naval establishment, is on all hands admitted; and it is a subject of general regret that it has been so long delayed. The delay has been in the highest degree injurious to the service, and is daily rendering reform more and more difficult, as it becomes more and more indispensable. Impressed with this truth, and anxious that no time should be lost in commencing this important work, I respectfully bring it to your notice at the earliest day. I do not propose, however, to present at this time more than the mere outlines of the many important subjects to which I desire to invite your attention. It is presumed that Congress, if it should act upon the subject at all, will refer it to committees of their own

body, before whom I hope to be prepared to lay all the information that may be required.

The first step ought to be the preparation of a full code of laws and rules for the government and regulation of the naval service. Without this, every other measure of reform will be unavailing. It is of the essence of free government that the rights, the duties, and the responsibilities of all men, in all conditions, should be ascertained and accurately defined; and it is of the essence of tyranny that men should be punished for imputed offences, or at the arbitrary discretion of their judges. This truth applies with peculiar force to those who are engaged in military service. The strict discipline which that service requires, renders necessary a great variety of rules which would be useless in the ordinary conditions of society, which involve no moral or social crime, but which, nevertheless, it is often necessary to enforce by the most rigorous sanctions. It is in the highest degree unjust in itself, and violative of the spirit of our institutions, that these new and peculiar responsibilities should be in any respect uncertain. And yet it is in many cases extremely difficult to determine, according to existing rules, what is and what is not an offence in our naval service; and in a great variety of cases it is altogether uncertain, and dependant upon the arbitrary will of courts-martial, in what mode, and to what extent, offences, real or imputed, shall be punished. A short review of our legislation upon this subject, will serve to present it in its proper light.

By the act of Congress approved 23d of April, 1800, certain general rules and regulations were enacted, embracing the most prominent and important subjects relating to the service. These are still in force; but, although they are of a character to apply to the navy, in whatever condition it may be placed, and were deemed altogether sufficient for it in its then infant state, they are too few in number, and enter too little into details, to answer their purpose at the present day. Acting upon this idea, the Board of Navy Commissioners, soon after its establishment in 1815, compiled "Rules, Regulations, and Instructions for the Naval Service of the United States," with the consent of the Secretary of the Navy, in obedience to an act of Congress passed the 7th of February, 1815, entitled 'An act to alter and amend the several acts for establishing a Navy Department, by adding thereto a Board of Commissioners.' This compilation, commonly called the Blue Book, is still *practically* in force, and, together with the act of 1800, constitutes the only system of rules and regulations for the government of the navy.

By the act establishing the Board of Navy Commissioners, it is provided "that the said Board of Commissioners, by and with the consent of the Secretary of the Navy, be, and are hereby, authorized to prepare such rules and regulations as shall be necessary for securing a uniformity in the several classes of vessels and their equipments, and for repairing and refitting them, and for securing responsibility in the subordinate officers and agents; which regulations, when approved by the President of the United States, shall be respected and obeyed, until altered and revoked by the same authority; and the said rules and regulations, thus prepared and approved, shall be laid before Congress at their next session." Whether or not the Blue Book (which derives its authority from this law alone) was ever approved by the President of the United States, or laid before Congress, I have no means of ascertaining. The probability is, that it was *not* approved, as the book itself contains no evidence upon the subject. But, even if both these formalities were observed, it is altogether clear to my mind, that the Commissioners acted with-

out authority in prescribing many of the rules and regulations contained in that book.

The obvious intention of the act of Congress is to make the Navy Commissioners the ministerial agents of the Secretary of the Navy, for certain purposes. He has no authority to employ any *other* agents for those purposes. Among other things, it is their duty, under the second section of the act, "by and with the consent of the Secretary of the Navy, to prepare such rules and regulations as shall be necessary," in the execution of the specific duties therein assigned to them, and for "securing responsibility in the subordinate officers and agents" *employed in those duties*. There is nothing in the terms of the act, and nothing in its plain purpose and intention, to authorize the Commissioners to prepare a *general* code of rules and regulations for the government of the navy. They were strictly confined to the purposes mentioned in the act, to wit, "securing a uniformity in the several classes of vessels and their equipments, and repairing and refitting them." For these purposes, and for no other, they had authority to prepare, by and with the consent of the Secretary of the Navy, such rules and regulations as they might deem proper; and, as a necessary incident of this authority, to prepare additional rules for securing responsibility in their subordinate agents.

That this is the true meaning of the act of Congress is so apparent that I deem it wholly unnecessary to enter into a more critical examination in order to prove it.

But the Blue Book is not confined to these objects. It contains a great variety of rules and regulations applying to every department of naval duty, and to every officer and man connected with the naval service. It is designed as a general code of rules and regulations for the government of the navy, and, as such, it is universally received, and daily acted on.

Under this code, thus questionable in its authority, and altogether insufficient in itself, the navy has been governed for twenty-three years! There is, in truth, no law upon the subject—no obligatory rule whatever, except what is found in the act of 1800; and that is altogether imperfect and inadequate.

This subject was brought before Congress in 1832. A law was passed in that year authorizing the President to constitute a board of naval officers, to be composed of the navy commissioners and two post-captains, whose duty it should be, "with the aid and assistance of the Attorney General, carefully to revise the rules and regulations governing the naval service, with the view to adapt them to the present and future exigencies of the service; which rules and regulations, when approved by him and sanctioned by Congress, should have the force of law, and stand in lieu of all others theretofore enacted." The board, thus constituted, convened in November of the same year. In November, 1833, they submitted the result of their labors to the Secretary of the Navy, and on the 23d of the following month the rules and regulations thus prepared were approved by the President of the United States, and submitted to Congress. On the 7th February, 1834, the chairman of the Naval Committee of the House of Representatives moved that 1,000 additional copies be printed, which was directed on the following day. On the 1st May, 1834, the President submitted to Congress "certain proposals for amending the present laws in relation to the naval service." Whether or not these were the same proposals which he had previously submitted (viz. on the 23d December, 1833) I am not informed, nor is it of any importance in itself. The probability is, that some amendment of the rules

originally prepared was presented in May, 1834. On the 8th of the same month, the chairman of the Naval Committee of the House of Representatives reported a resolution for the printing of 1,000 additional copies of the *amended* rules and regulations for the government of the navy. No further action was had upon the subject, and Congress adjourned on the 30th of the following month.

From this statement it appears that this important subject has been before Congress ever since the year 1832, and that nothing effectual has yet been done to accomplish the object of the act of that year. Soon after the appointment of Mr. Paulding as Secretary of the Navy, he took the subject up and urged it with all proper zeal. Such, however, was the pressure of other duties upon the board, that it was impossible for them to attend to the revision of the naval code, as Mr. Paulding desired, until December, 1840. On the 19th of February, 1841, they submitted their report to the Secretary of the Navy, who approved thereof, but did not lay it before Congress, as the act of 1832 directed. Neither was this done at the called session of May last. I have now the honor to lay this report before you, and to ask that it be submitted to Congress.

I cannot recommend the approval of these rules and regulations. I believe them to be objectionable in many important respects; and, as the further action of Congress in regard to them is necessary, I recommend that they be again submitted to revision. I would respectfully suggest that the preparation of rules and regulations for the government of *all* classes and grades in the navy ought not to be intrusted to any *one* of them exclusively. A mixed commission, embracing the civil as well as the military departments of service, would, it is believed, be best qualified to adapt to every part of the service the proper laws and rules for the government and regulation of it. Such a commission might, with the aid of the rules now submitted, easily report to Congress in time for its action during the present session.

The evils resulting from the want of a proper naval code are of the most serious character, and will, if not remedied, ultimately ruin the naval service of our country. What can be expected of a community of men, living together under circumstances tending to constant excitement and collisions, with no fixed law to govern them, and where even rank and station are imperfectly defined? The necessary consequence of such a state of things must be, disputes, contests, disorder, and confusion. Sometimes unauthorized power will be assumed, and at other times lawful authority will be disobeyed. It is impossible that a wholesome discipline can prevail in this uncertain condition of official rank and authority. The same uncertainty prevails in regard to punishments. The unbounded latitude of discretion allowed to courts-martial in this respect is of most evil consequence, and calls loudly for correction. It invites to the indulgence of prejudice and favoritism—subjecting light offences to undue punishment, and suffering great offenders to escape with trivial penalties. And, even if no such improper bias could be supposed to exist, it is not to be expected that all courts will look upon all offences with the same eye. Men of lenient and indulgent feelings will punish lightly the same offences which those of a different character will punish with the most rigorous severity. Hence an inequality of punishment will prevail, odious in itself, calculated to excite discontent, to bring courts-martial into disrepute, and to destroy the just influence of their sentences, as a means of preserving the honor and discipline of the service. To prevent these evils, to remedy the disorders which now prevail, and to place

the navy in a healthy and efficient condition, it is absolutely necessary to provide for it a code of laws and rules which shall accurately define rank and authority, plainly prescribe duties and responsibilities, and ascertain crimes and their punishments. And I would respectfully urge upon the proper departments of the Government the indispensable necessity of entering upon this important work without loss of time.

The subject next in importance is the reorganization of the Navy Department. I have had but a short experience in this Department; but a short experience is enough to display its defects, even to the most superficial observation. It is, in truth, not organized at all. The labor to be performed must, under any circumstances, be great and onerous; but it is rendered doubly so by the want of a proper arrangement and distribution of duties. At present, a multitude of duties are imposed upon the head of the Department, which any one of its clerks could discharge as well as himself, but which, from their pressing nature, he is not permitted to postpone. Hence, his whole time is occupied in trifling details, rendering it impossible for him to bestow the requisite attention upon more important subjects, involving the great interests of the service. These details are, indeed, so numerous and multifarious, as to constitute in themselves an amount of duties fully equal to the powers of any one man. In addition to this, the present want of proper arrangement is extremely unfavorable to that direct individual responsibility which it is so necessary to impose on every public officer. The same cause occasions delays in the operations of the Department, by rendering necessary a variety of tedious official forms, and, consequently, preventing that promptness of action which is indispensable to its due efficiency. And it is not the least among the evils of this state of things, that the precise condition of the several branches of the service cannot be ascertained without much time and labor; thus adding to the cost of the Department, while it diminishes its usefulness. These inconveniences and embarrassments, and many others which are daily felt in the administration of the Department, would in some degree be removed by a mere rearrangement and proper distribution of the labor now employed in it; but additional labor is absolutely necessary, in order to enable it to discharge its functions in the manner required by the interest of the service. It would not be proper to enter into all the details of the subject in this report. It is already before Congress, and will doubtless receive the early attention of that body. A resolution was adopted by the House of Representatives, on the 19th February, 1839, directing the Secretary of the Navy to "report to this House, at the commencement of the next Congress, a plan for the reorganization of this branch of the public service, adopting as the basis of his plan the division of the duties now performed by the Board of Navy Commissioners, and their assignment to separate bureaux." In obedience to this resolution, Mr. Paulding, the then Secretary, submitted, on the 30th December, 1839, a long and elaborate report, "based on the principle presented in the resolution." To this report I respectfully refer. In most of its views, and in all of its more important conclusions, I fully concur. I do not, however, adopt his plan precisely as he has proposed it. Some change in the principles, and some additional provisions, will probably be necessary, which the experience of the Department will enable it to suggest, in arranging the details of the law. I earnestly invoke immediate attention to the subject, firmly believing that the proposed reform is indispensable to the due administration of the Department, and that it cannot be longer delayed without serious injury to the service.

There is reason to believe that it is now the settled policy of the Government to increase the navy as rapidly as the means at its disposal will admit, and it may therefore be unnecessary that I should offer any suggestions upon that subject. I should not feel, however, that my duty was properly discharged, if I should fail to add whatever influence my own recommendation may possess to the many considerations which suggest this as our true policy.

We may safely estimate the mercantile property of our citizens annually afloat on the ocean, and employed in foreign trade, at not less than one hundred and twenty millions of dollars; and to this is to be added the value of the vessels in which that property is conveyed, and the value of American interests vested in mercantile establishments abroad, and dependant on American trade. The coasting trade, not including such articles as are exported, cannot be accurately estimated, but it certainly amounts to many millions of dollars. Taking the aggregate of all property annually exposed to an enemy on the ocean, on the lakes, and on our principal bays and rivers, it will probably be found that it does not fall short of one hundred and fifty millions of dollars. So large an interest is entitled to demand, and justly expects to receive, the most certain and ample protection. This is due alike to the citizen whose property is thus exposed, and to the Government whose revenues are derived principally from the duties which that property pays. But that protection can be found only on the ocean. Trade is never secure unless it can, at all times and in all places, appeal for support to the national flag; and it ought to feel that it is safe wherever that flag is displayed.

Every nation engaged in foreign commerce, to any valuable extent, provides, as a part of its established policy, an adequate military marine. Our own country is far behind all the considerable nations of the world in this respect. As compared with England and France, the two principal commercial nations of Europe, it is found that England, with much less than twice our foreign tonnage, has more than eight times as many vessels of war, exclusive of her steamships; France, with only one third of our foreign tonnage, has more than five times as many vessels of war. The comparison might be still further extended, scarcely less to the disadvantage of our own country. It may well excite surprise that, with so large an interest at stake, and with a certainty that it will rapidly increase from year to year, so little preparation should have been made for its protection and security; and this surprise will not be diminished when we reflect on the vast interests which are connected with, and dependant upon, our foreign commerce, and which must necessarily flourish or decay along with it. The farmer, the planter, the mechanic, the manufacturer, and even the day-laborer, depends, in a greater or less degree, upon this for the success of his own peculiar branch of industry; and even the fine arts themselves are not exempt from the same influences. Commerce may be regarded as our principal interest, because, to a great extent, it includes within it every other interest.

Wars often arise from rivalry in trade, and from the conflicts of interests which belong to it. The presence of an adequate naval force, to protect commerce, by promptly redressing the injuries which are done to it, is one of the best means of preventing those disputes and collisions which are so apt to interrupt the peace and harmony of nations.

But these views, although sufficiently important in themselves to justify and require a very large increase of our naval force, are by no means the most interesting which the subject suggests. Ranking in the first class of

nations, we are under an absolute necessity to regulate our policy, in some degree, by that of other countries, so far as their policy may affect us. All the considerable maritime Powers have, within late years, added greatly to their naval forces, and are at this moment actively engaged in the same work. This fact alone would seem to render it absolutely necessary that we should make similar preparation on our part. In proportion as other countries multiply the means by which they may annoy us, we ought, in common prudence, to add to our own defences and to our own means of resisting insult and injury. Any other course will only invite aggressions upon our rights, which will continue to increase so long as we shall patiently bear them, and which must ultimately force us to resistance, at the precise time when we are least prepared to make it successfully.

Free governments, which are necessarily more embarrassed in their councils and slower in their action than those which are not bound to observe the necessary forms of free government, have a peculiar interest to guard their soil from invasion. The nature of our institutions presents a very strong appeal upon this point. A war between the United States and any considerable maritime Power, would not be conducted at this day as it would have been even twenty years ago. It would be a war of incursions, aiming at revolution. The first blow would be struck at us through our own institutions. No nation, it is presumed, would expect to be successful over us, for any length of time, in a fair contest of arms upon our own soil: and no wise nation would attempt it. A more promising expedient would be sought, in arraying what are supposed to be the hostile elements of our social system against one another. An enemy so disposed, and free to land upon any part of our soil which might promise success to his enterprise, would be armed with a four-fold power of annoyance. Of the *ultimate result* of such incursions, we have no reason to be afraid; but, even in the best event, war upon our own soil would be the more expensive, the more embarrassing, and the more horrible in its effects, by compelling us at the same time to oppose an enemy in the field, and to guard against attempts to subvert our social systems.

Heretofore we have found, in the shallowness of many of our waters, security, to a certain extent, against invasion by sea. So long as maritime wars were conducted in vessels of large size and great draught, we had little to apprehend from them except at a few points, and those were susceptible of adequate defence on land. But this security can no longer be relied on. The application of steam-power to vessels of war, and the improvements which have recently been made in artillery, are destined to change the whole system of maritime war. Steamboats of light draught, and which may be easily transported across the ocean in vessels of a larger class, may invade us at almost any point of our extended coast, may penetrate the interior through our shallow rivers, and thus expose half our country to hostile attacks. The celerity with which these movements could be made, the facility with which such vessels could escape, and the promptness with which they could change the point of attack, would enable an enemy, with a comparatively inconsiderable force, to harass our whole seaboard, and to carry all the horrors of war into the securest retreats of our people. The effect of these incursions would be terrible everywhere; but in the southern portion of our country they might, and probably would be disastrous in the extreme.

It is obvious that a war thus conducted must be successful, to a very great extent, in spite of all the defences on land which we could contrive. Nothing

less than the conversion of half our country into a military garrison could protect us against it. Such is the exposed condition of our country, such is the character of our institutions, and such the position of our people, that a population of twice our present number, under the best possible military organization, would avail us but little. While the combined Powers of the world could not subdue us, even a secondary naval Power could avoid our land-defences, set our armies at defiance, and prosecute against us a war intolerably harassing and disastrous.

The single question, then, which we have to decide, in reference to this subject, is, where and by whom shall those battles be fought, which may hereafter become necessary in defence of our property, our institutions, our honor, and our lives? Shall we meet the enemy upon the ocean, with men trained and disciplined for the contest, or suffer him to land upon our shores, trusting to a scattered and harassed people to expel him from their farms and their firesides? This question admits of but one answer. But it is worse than idle to suppose that all those high interests, to which I have alluded, can be adequately protected by our present naval force. Four thousand miles of exposed sea and lake coast, a foreign commerce scattered through the most distant seas, and a domestic trade exposed alike upon the ocean and upon our interior waters, are, in effect, surrendered to the enemy, when they are intrusted to the protection of some twenty ships in commission.

If these views be not altogether deceptive, the policy of increasing our navy, without further delay, is obvious. *How far* it shall be increased, the wisdom of Congress will decide. Looking to it as the chief, if not the only adequate defence of our country against those wars of incursions from which so much evil is to be apprehended, I respectfully suggest, that we cannot safely stop short of half the naval force of the strongest maritime power in the world. Our policy is peace, and we do not propose to ourselves a war of aggression in any case, except so far as may be necessary as a measure of defence. It is not probable that any nation could detach from other service more than one fourth of its whole naval force, to attack us upon our own coast; so that, after deducting such part of our own force as we could not employ at all, and such part as we should be compelled to employ elsewhere, we might reasonably hope to repel from our shores any maritime power, with only half its force in ships. With less than this, our fleets would serve only to swell the triumphs and feed the cupidity of our enemy. It is better to have none at all than to have less than enough. I am aware that this great increase of our naval power cannot be effected in any short time. I propose it only as the object at which our policy ought to aim, and toward the attainment of which your measures ought to be steadily directed. An annual appropriation, as liberal as the means of the Treasury will allow, will in a few years accomplish all that is desirable.

Of what descriptions of vessels our navy ought to be composed, is a question of great importance, and one which we are compelled to decide with reference to the practice of other countries. Doubtless a very large part of it ought to consist of steamships. Experience has shown that these vessels may be rendered perfectly safe at sea, and that they may be so constructed as to adapt them, in other respects, to purposes of war. Of their great usefulness the world has had a striking proof in the recent operations of the British squadron on the coast of Syria; troops were transported a distance of two thousand miles over the ocean, and were engaged in battle in Asia Minor on the sixteenth day after leaving England. This and other facilities afforded

by this class of vessels were so great and effective that the admiral declared that "his success was owing to the efficiency of his steamers." We may well profit by the lesson thus taught us. I respectfully suggest, however, that it would not be wise in us to engage very extensively in the construction of steamships of war of the largest class at this time. Imitating the example of England, our wisest policy would be to aid the private enterprise of our citizens in constructing packet-ships, to ply between this country and foreign ports. These should, of course, be so constructed as to fit them for war purposes, and should be held subject to the demand of the Government, upon equitable conditions. There will, in all probability, be enough of such vessels to answer all the purposes for which steamships of the largest class would be required, and they would be furnished at a comparatively small cost to the Government. Improvements are daily made, not only in steam machinery, but in the propelling power applied to steam-vessels. Experiments are now in progress which promise important results in these respects, and it would probably be judicious not to expend large sums in the construction of steamships for distant cruises until these results shall be made known. But the same reasoning does not apply to steam-vessels of a smaller class, destined for the defence of our own coast and harbors. These ought not, under any circumstances, to be delayed. They would be particularly useful on the lakes and in the Gulf of Mexico. On the lakes they might be advantageously employed, under proper regulations, in the revenue service. They would be peculiarly adapted to the Gulf of Mexico, in consequence of the calms and currents which prevail there, and of their greater facility in making harbor in the violent tempests which are common in that latitude. There is, in truth, but the single harbor of Pensacola in which a ship of large draught can find shelter, although there are many which afford sufficient depth of water for steam-vessels of the proper size. These vessels should be built of white oak, reserving the live oak for those of a different class.

Steamships have been built in Europe altogether of iron. As far as the experiment has been made, it is understood to have been successful. I recommend that it be made here also, with at least one vessel of medium size, sufficiently large to afford a fair test, without exposing too much to the hazard of failure. The great abundance of that material found in all parts of our country affords us every facility which can be desired; and our workmen will soon acquire, if they do not now possess, the requisite skill in converting it into vessels. We may thus acquire a cheap and almost an imperishable naval force, while, at the same time, we afford encouragement to some of the most useful branches of our home industry.

In my opinion, there is no necessity at present to increase the number of our line-of-battle ships. Some of those which we now have would be more useful if cut down to frigates of the largest class. There is, even in the present condition of the service, a pressing demand for sloops of war, brigs, and schooners; and I recommend that a suitable number of them be immediately built. Not less than ten are necessary, even in the present condition of our navy. One of them should be kept in commission and ready for service at each of our principal ports; and this may be done without any considerable additional expense, because they will always be prepared to perform a variety of duties for which the Government now pays high prices to merchant vessels. Moreover, they may be built of such timber as is rejected in the construction of larger vessels. It is proper that we should have some of our vessels always ready for sudden emergencies, and none are so cheap or so convenient as brigs and schooners.

In view of any considerable increase of the navy, a large addition to our frigates of the first class ought to be made. Our present 44-gun frigates would not encounter, upon equal terms, the modern frigates of the first class of England and France. To enable us to contend successfully with these, the principal maritime powers of Europe, we must not only increase our general naval force in proportion as they increase theirs, but we must also build vessels of corresponding size and description with those which they will use against us.

I renew, with anxious desire for its success, the recommendation so often made by my predecessors for the establishment of higher grades in the naval service. This will be absolutely necessary if the navy should be considerably increased, and would be highly useful even in its present condition. The rank of admiral is known in all the navies of the world except our own; it has existed through a long course of past ages, and has been fully tested in the experience of all nations. *It still exists, and is still approved.* I can perceive nothing in our peculiar situation to prevent us from profiting by the lesson thus afforded. That which has been found valuable in the naval service of other countries, we have good reason to believe, will be equally valuable in our own. But, apart from this view of the subject, there are many reasons, of a positive character, why we should no longer delay to place ourselves upon an equality, in this respect, with all the considerable nations of the world.

It is, as a general rule, wise and politic to establish as many grades as possible in all military service. The officer should always have before him some station, yet to be reached, and worthy of a high and generous ambition. He who has attained all that is attainable, has no need of any further exertions than just enough to sustain him where he is; all beyond this is supererogatory, for he is not permitted to hope that either the utmost exertion of his powers, or the most generous self-sacrifices in the public service, will ever raise him one grade higher in the ranks of his countrymen.

A captaincy in the navy is of very difficult attainment, according to our slow rate of promotion; yet all those who are fortunate enough to reach it, continue to feel, in no less degree than before, the depressing influences to which I have alluded. They daily see, in the navies of other countries, men, not older in the service than themselves, nor more worthy in any respect, filling higher stations, and enjoying more distinguishing proofs of the confidence and gratitude of their country. They also see men, of *equal* grade with themselves, cheered and encouraged by the hope of a well-deserved preferment, to which they know that their own country does not permit them to aspire. What can be more natural than that they should feel disheartened and mortified, and ultimately be forced to compare, disadvantageously to their own country, its naval service with that of other nations?

It is considered wise and proper in the army, to raise the rank of the officer in proportion to the number of men subjected to his command. There are in that service nine different grades of commissioned officers, while in the navy there are but three; hence, it is very difficult to arrange the comparative ranks of the two services. Indeed, it is impossible to do it without *supposing* new ranks in the navy, unknown to the law. This, though not a very serious evil, is an inconvenience which it is desirable to avoid; and, so far as the *good* of the service is concerned, it is not perceived why a captain in the navy should be considered better adapted to the command of a fleet, than a brigadier general in the army to the command of a division. The two services

equally require *rank* according to the extent of command. It is true there is no necessity for so *many* grades in the navy as in the army ; but the difference is in the lower grades only, and not in the higher.

Our naval officers are often subjected to serious difficulties and embarrassments in the interchange of civilities with those of other countries on foreign stations. The admiral of England, France, or Russia, is not willing to admit that he is of no higher grade than the post-captain of the United States. Our commanders, in order to enforce from other countries the same respect which they themselves are willing to pay, are compelled to insist that the highest grade of service, in the United States, by whatever title it may be distinguished, is equal to the highest grade of service in any other country ; and, of course, that an American post-captain is of equal rank with the admiral of any other country, whose commission is not of older date. This claim is at least very questionable. Rank is a positive thing ; and, by the consent and usage of nations, is indicated, in the naval service, by the flag which the commander wears. It is not surprising, therefore, that the admirals of Europe should refuse to recognise, as their equals in rank, the captains of the United States, whose very flag affords conclusive proof that their own country regards them as inferior. It is true, this claim of equality has in some instances been allowed, but it is generally denied ; and hence that interchange of friendly courtesies, so useful in preserving the harmony and good understanding of nations, has often been prevented. In war, the inconvenience would be still more serious. Whatever concessions might be made in time of peace, from feelings of respect and courtesy, no just claim of rank would be yielded in time of war. The American captain, called to act in concert with the admiral of a friendly nation, of younger date, would necessarily be compelled to yield the honor of the chief command, or to contest it at the price of that harmony which would be necessary to the success of their joint enterprise. It is not to be supposed that nations, whose systems have been so long established and acted on, will yield, in this respect, to the peculiar views and wishes of the United States. The inconveniences resulting from our anomalous position, are seriously felt, and ought, in my opinion, to be removed, by placing our officers on a ground equally advantageous with that which is occupied by those of other countries and corresponding commands.

Additional ranks in the navy would be eminently useful as an instrument of discipline. The post-captain of to-day is precisely equal, in rank, to the oldest post-captain in the service. He *feels* his equality from the first moment that he attains it ; and, at the same moment, the disinclination to be commanded and controlled by his equal rises within him. He will not willingly submit to learn, as a scholar, what his own position authorizes him to *teach*. He looks to a separate command for himself ; he begins to lay down systems of his own, and turns a deaf ear to the lessons of experience, imparted by older heads, because they cannot claim any higher rank. The respect and deference, so necessary to discipline, are rarely felt, except where there is a difference of rank ; and they are most strongly felt where that difference is greatest. In this way the creation of higher grades would be advantageously felt through all the grades below them. It would be particularly beneficial in its influences upon the younger classes of officers, upon whom it is so important that correct impressions should be made.

There is yet another encouragement which should be held out to our navy, in a much more liberal spirit than has heretofore been manifested. Advancement in the service has been so slow, as to render it almost hopeless to a large number of our most promising officers of the lower grades. Many would long since have retired from it in despair, but for the fact that their education and pursuits unfit them for profitable occupations on shore. Surely an officer, who has faithfully devoted to his country 12 or 15 years of the prime of his life, and at the expense of all qualification for other pursuits, is entitled to be advanced at least one grade in the ranks of her service. I respectfully submit, that it is not wise in us to place ourselves in a position to be compelled to intrust to age and imbecility the duties which require the vigor and energy of younger years; and yet, under the systems which have heretofore prevailed, there are few who can hope to attain the higher commands, until they have also attained a period of life, at which the best powers of man begin to decay.

If it be our purpose to increase our naval force, we cannot too soon begin to train a suitable band of officers to take charge of it. It is to be borne in mind, that, although we can *build* a good ship in a few weeks, it require twenty years of arduous service, of active instruction, and of strict discipline, to qualify an officer to command her. If, therefore, we would be prepared for the exigencies of the next twenty years, we must begin our preparations to-day. It is mere prodigality to build ships, if we have no officers to command them. There is no school for the sea-officer but the ship itself. The theory which he may acquire on shore, although a necessary part of his education, only prepares him to *begin* to learn what he is required to know as a naval commander. A small fleet, properly employed, will afford such a school to pupils enough to supply a large one. We should not, therefore, wait to build new ships, before we begin to train their officers. We have, at present, not enough for our navy, if all our ships were in commission. Those ships, if actively employed, together with such as shall be built, from time to time, even under the most restricted scheme for the increase of our naval force, will afford all necessary means of employing and training twice the present number of our officers, of every grade.

There is an absolute necessity for a large increase of the marine corps. On this subject I refer to the accompanying letter of Colonel Henderson, and the tables which he has prepared for the information of this Department (No 16). From these it will be seen that nothing less than three times the present number of marines will answer the exigencies of the service, even without any increase of our present naval force. Requisitions are frequently made for marines, with which it is impossible to comply, however necessary their services may be. In some cases, officers in command of important posts have felt it due to themselves to inform the Department that they could not hold themselves justly responsible for the safety of the public property intrusted to their charge, for want of the force necessary to protect it. At present, citizens are employed as watchmen at navy-yards, at prices greater, in some instances, than the wages of marines; and as they are not liable to martial-law, and are free to quit the service when they please, great inconvenience is frequently experienced, and the property is not always duly secure. A sufficient force for all such purposes ought to be provided, of men belonging to the service, and amenable to the laws which regulate it.

Of the importance of marines in the naval service, but one opinion is *now*

entertained. The principal maritime nations of the world, with the exception of ourselves alone, have, within late years, greatly increased this part of their force. I respectfully suggest that there should be provided for each ship not less than one marine for every gun, beside a sufficient number for the police of naval stations on shore. A still larger proportion of marines would, in the opinion of experienced officers, be highly valuable in the service.

The laws and regulations for the government of the marine corps are extremely imperfect, and require amendment. A new code has already been prepared by a board of officers, constituted for the purpose, which it is proposed to incorporate in the general revision of the naval code, hereinbefore recommended.

The propriety of establishing naval schools has frequently been submitted to the consideration of Congress. I again respectfully bring it to your notice, as a subject of increasing interest to the navy. The use of steam-vessels, in war, will render necessary a different order of scientific knowledge from that which has heretofore been required. If our navy should be increased by the addition of any considerable number of steam-vessels, engineers will form an important class of naval officers. It will be necessary to assign to them an appropriate rank, and to subject them to all the laws of the service. Great care should be used in the selection of them, because a great deal will depend on their skill and competency; hence it is necessary that they should pass through a prescribed course of instruction, and that the Government should have the proof of their competency which an examination, conducted under their own rules, would afford. The important object can be best attained by the establishment of naval schools, provided with all necessary means of uniting practice with theory. The advantages which the army has derived from the academy at West Point, afford a sufficient proof that a similar institution for the navy would produce like results.

In connexion with this subject, I would ask your attention to the situation of the professors of mathematics, now employed in the service. This useful class of men have no permanent connexion with the navy, but are called in only as their services are needed, and are not paid except when on actual duty. The consequence is, that they cannot rely on this employment for support, and are often reluctantly driven to other pursuits. It is to be presumed that men, whose talents and attainments qualify them to be teachers in the navy, are equally qualified to be teachers on land; and, as this latter is the less precarious position, the *best* qualified will be the most apt to seek it. Hence the Department cannot rely with any assurance on being able to command suitable professors, at all times, when their services may be required. It is, I think, of great importance that some provision should be made upon this subject. I also recommend that a certain rank or position be given to the professors, which will relieve them from the necessity of messing and sleeping with their pupils. This close and constant association is well calculated to weaken the respect and influence which their relation to the young officers ought to inspire, and which is absolutely necessary to give due effect to their instructions. I doubt whether their services, upon the present system, are worth the money which they cost, although they would be highly valuable under proper regulations.

It will be perceived that the estimates for the ensuing year are much larger than they have heretofore been. It is confidently believed, however, that nothing has been asked for which is not necessary, and that nothing which is deemed necessary has been over-estimated.

Having recommended a large increase in most of our squadrons, it followed, of course, that I should ask the requisite appropriations to support them. Presuming that Government does not build ships without designing to use them, it would appear to be the obvious duty of this Department to keep as many of them in constant service as can be profitably employed. This is, indeed, the true economy. Some of our finest ships have decayed to a serious extent, while yet upon the stocks, and still more have, after having been launched, required expensive repairs before they have been sent to sea. This is the necessary consequence of keeping them in our docks. Ships in actual service are generally clean, tight, dry, and properly ventilated. A careful guard is kept over them, so that slight decays are immediately detected, and repaired without any considerable expense. It has frequently happened that our vessels have been found, after their return from long cruises, in better order for service than when they left the docks. On the other hand, when they are kept in port without crews, they decay rapidly, for want of the care and attention necessary to preserve them. It may well be doubted whether the aggregate of losses sustained and repairs rendered necessary, by the non-use of our vessels, has fallen very far short of what it would have cost to keep them in commission.

But this is the least part of the evil. While our vessels are unemployed, our officers are idle. They thus lose the opportunity of acquiring a due knowledge of their profession, and naturally fall into those injurious habits which idleness always engenders. It would not be surprising if they should forget, in some degree, their respect for the flag which they are so rarely permitted to hoist, and lose, in indolence and despondency, the lofty spirit and generous aspirations to which the navy owes its past renown. I am happy to assure you that its present *personnel* does not deserve this neglect. At no previous time has it been able to boast of so many able officers of the higher grades, or of so many young officers of fine spirit, good attainment, and fair promise. Nothing is required but to brush off the rust of idleness by giving them employment, and to hold out to them the encouragement of a reasonable hope that a life devoted to the country, in the arduous service of the sea, may claim, at least, the reward of that country's notice and respect.

Other reasons for the present increased estimates will be found in the report of the Navy Commissioners, which I herewith present. Their statement is so minute and specific, and at the same time so condensed, that it conveys all needful information upon this point, in as few words as I could use for the same purpose. I content myself, therefore, with a simple reference to that document, remarking, at the same time, that it meets my entire approval.

It will be perceived that a very small appropriation is asked for continuing the necessary work at the navy-yard at Pensacola. The great importance of that yard is fully appreciated, and every effort will be used to complete it in as short a time as possible. It is believed, however, that the appropriation now asked is as large as can be advantageously used during the next year. I shall not hesitate to ask an additional appropriation should it hereafter appear to be necessary.

I invite your attention in an especial manner to the navy-yard at Brooklyn. Should the Government proceed with the construction of the dry-dock at that place, it is believed to be absolutely necessary to enlarge the yard to a very considerable extent. There is not at present a sufficient water front for the accommodation of half the number of vessels which will probably be assem-

bled there at one time; nor is there within the yard space enough for conducting advantageously the necessary mechanical operations of such an establishment. It is also worthy of consideration that the safety of the yard is much endangered by the adjoining private buildings, one of which is a turpentine distillery, and nearly all of which are built of wood. In case of fire on that side of the yard, it would be extremely difficult to save the public property. I respectfully suggest that an establishment of such magnitude and value should be bounded on all sides either by water or by a public street, so as to afford the greatest possible security against danger from fire. The present is a very favorable time for the purchase of the additional ground necessary to the attainment of this object. I recommend this subject to your consideration before any large additional expenditure shall be made for permanent improvements under the present arrangement.

A suit has been commenced, by an individual, for the recovery of eight or ten acres of the land attached to the navy hospital at Norfolk. So much of that land as is unclaimed by individuals, has now growing upon it a grove of flourishing trees, which would, if properly protected, afford great comfort and refreshment to the invalids, while it would add much to the beauty of the grounds. At present, however, it is not enclosed, and consequently is subject to depredations which there are no means of preventing. These depredations will in a short time destroy the whole growth. A very small expenditure would protect it, and would be very beneficially applied to that object.

You will perceive that the Commissioners ask for additional clerks. Fully convinced that these are altogether necessary, I should strenuously urge the subject upon your attention but for the hope that the wants of the entire Department in that respect will be provided for in the reorganization of it, which I have herein so earnestly recommended.

Additional marine barracks are required, and, if that corps should be considerably increased, will be absolutely necessary.

Permit me to express my entire approval of the suggestion of the Commissioners in relation to a suitable depot for the charts and nautical instruments belonging to the navy. These have been procured at great labor and expense, and are indispensable in the naval service. The small expenditure which will be necessary to preserve them in a condition always ready for use, is not worthy a moment's consideration when compared with the great purposes which they are designed to answer. They are a necessary part of a naval establishment worthy of the present and growing greatness of our country.

In the administration of this Department, it will ever be an object of great solicitude with me to practise a prudent economy in all things. But I have not sought to save the public money, by simply declining to apply it to its most valuable public uses. Believing it to be an object of the first importance to place our navy upon the most efficient establishment, I have not expected to effect that object at any small cost. The saving which exposes the country, in a defenceless condition, to hostile attacks, will not be recommended by me. The spirit which pauses to calculate the cost of measures rendered necessary for the support of the honor and glory of our country, will never, it is hoped, display itself in this Department. I have felt it to be my duty to place the alternative fairly and fully before the country. An efficient navy cannot be built and supported without very great expense; but this expense is more than repaid, even in time of peace, by the services which such a navy can render. It war, it will be worth to us all the value which we

place on the safety of our exposed seacoast, on the security of millions of our people, and on the well-earned glory of our naval flag. It is enough that a *necessity* for this expenditure can be shown; the *amount* of it will be a secondary consideration with a people who truly love their country and properly value its institutions.

All which is respectfully submitted.

A. P. UPSHUR.

To the PRESIDENT of the *United States*.