

STEALING ENGINES

To Supply the Needs of the Confederates.

DARING EXPLOITS UNDERTAKEN

Hard and Trying Pulls Over Country Roads—Great Ingenuity Displayed in Meeting the Emergencies that Arose—Finally Landed in Richmond and Put in Condition for Use a Year Later.

Among the earliest and most perplexing problems that confronted the Confederate leaders in the Civil War was that of railroad transportation. The territory controlled by them at the beginning of the struggle—roughly speaking, that lying south of the Potomac—was threaded by numerous railroads, the equipment of which was fully equal to the requirements of peace traffic. But when war came and there were masses of men, horses, food, ordnance and ammunition to be moved, the lack of sufficient rolling-stock became at once apparent. The Southern railroads had a few shops, it is true, but their combined facilities were not equal to the manufacture of half the rolling-stock needed. Where were the much-needed locomotives, cars and machinery to come from? European markets were out of the question, and Northern shops equally so, for obvious reasons, even supposing that the requisite funds had been forthcoming. Invention, lashed by stern necessity, soon found a way out of the dilemma, at once simple, bold and effective, though not unattended with difficulty and danger.

The plan, based on the axiom that "all is fair in love and war," was nothing more or less than that of seizing the rolling-stock of a Northern road and appropriating it to use on the Southern lines, which included the Raleigh and Gaston, from Raleigh, N. C., to near Petersburg, Va.; the North Carolina Central, from Raleigh to Charlotte, N. C., and the Virginia Central, from Gordonsville, Va., to Richmond.

The successful carrying out of this scheme forms a unique and exciting chapter, which has been but little touched upon by war historians. It is the purpose of the present article to describe this remarkable movement, or rather series of movements (for the accomplishment of the plan covered nearly two years), and it is believed the recital will prove highly interesting news to the readers of this generation.

In June, 1861, the Confederate forces under Gen. Joseph E. Johnston occupied Harper's Ferry, controlling the Baltimore and Ohio railroad from Point of Rocks, a few miles south of Harper's Ferry, to a considerable distance west of Martinsburg. The Union forces, under General Patterson, were between the Potomac and the Pennsylvania line. Smiling fortune could hardly have fashioned a situation more favorable to the plans of the Confederates, covetous of Northern locomotives, for right between the hostile lines, and yet generally within the grasp of the Southern forces, ran the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, a prosperous trunk line of standard gauge, extending from Baltimore to St. Louis and completely equipped with first-class rolling-stock, while at Martinsburg, only thirty-eight miles from the nearest Southern railroad, and but eighteen miles from Winchester, which the Confederates at that time held without dispute, was the terminus of one of the divisions of this trunk line, with shops and roundhouse, a point of assembly and distribution for cars and engines.

Getting possession of this coveted material was a matter of protecting mechanical workmen while they vanquished mechanical difficulties. That these difficulties were by no means small will be seen from the statement that the sole means of transporting the prizes from Martinsburg, the point whence most of them were taken, to Strasburg, Va., where they could be placed on the tracks of the Manassas Gap railroad, was by way of Winchester, over a turnpike.

It is generally conceded that the idea of taking the Baltimore and Ohio rolling-stock originated with Col. Thomas R. Sharp, at the time of the occurrences narrated, captain and acting quartermaster in the Confederate army. He was a civil engineer by profession and a thorough railroad man, self-reliant and resourceful. Most of the facts given are obtained from J. E. Duke, now residing in Cumberland, Md., and in 1861 Colonel Sharp's confidential clerk. Mr. Duke, who enlisted in the army from Jefferson county, Va., was detailed for duty in the quartermaster's department, was present when some of the locomotives were taken, and was more or less identified with the entire movement. His memory has been refreshed and his facts substantiated from other sources when thought necessary.

The necessity of obtaining the railroad material in the manner described created a special organization, entirely separate and distinct from the military, though, of course co-operating with that, and which, while working under authority of the quartermaster-general's office at Richmond, might have been christened the "Railroad Corps."

The part taken by the military in the locomotive seizures was merely that of furnishing protection. The armed forces invested and picketed the country, and left the railroad men free to operate.

In speaking of the Baltimore and Ohio as a "Northern" road, the term is used broadly, as distinguishing the line from those lying entirely within what was at that period of the war Confederate territory. Geographically speaking, a good portion of the road traversed the border between the military North and South. It was frequently in the hands of both armies, though the Confederates inflicted nearly, if not all, the damage upon the road during the struggle.

In June, 1861, "Stonewall" Jackson, acting under the orders of General Johnston, went to Martinsburg and burned a number of cars and engines belonging to the Baltimore and Ohio road. The locomotives were but slightly injured (only the woodwork having been damaged), and were among those afterward carried off by the "Railroad Corps."

The first capture of locomotives took place at Martinsburg on a bright morning in July, 1861. Everything having been previously arranged, the forces selected to do this work, consisting of about thirty-five men, including six machinists, detailed from the ranks, ten teamsters, and about a dozen laborers, left Winchester before daybreak and proceeded by the pike to Martinsburg. They were under the immediate charge of Hugh Longst, an experienced railroad man from Richmond,

forty horses, hired and (where necessary) impressed from the farmers in the rich valley, and in some cases driven by their well-to-do owners, formed a highly picturesque feature of the expedition. They were to furnish the motive power. Fine specimens of horseflesh they were: big, brawny-limbed, well-fed, and in the very pink condition for draught work. They would need all their strength before the day was over, for there were some troublesome hills along the route over which the ponderous iron horses were to be pulled. Upon arrival at Martinsburg, Mr. Longst, a swarthy, wiry little man, looked about him until his eye fell upon a big locomotive standing on a side track near the roundhouse.

"That's the fellow we've got to begin on. Go in, boys!" he shouted. And then the skilled men and laborers began to work, using all expedition possible, for no one could say how soon they might be interrupted by the enemy. First, the tender was uncoupled, then the engine was raised by means of jackscrews and stripped of all the parts that could be removed, such as side and piston rods, valves, levers, lamps, bell, whistle, and sand-box. All the wheels were taken off except the flange drivers at the rear. The stripping was done to lighten weight, secure greater ease in handling, and for the better preservation of the running gear.

When this work had been completed, what had a few minutes before been a splendid iron Pegasus was a helpless inert mass, a mere shell, deformed and crippled, and ready to submit to any indignity, even to that of being hauled over a country road by the flesh and blood horses whose office it had so long usurped. The next step was to swing the prize around until it hung poised in the air at right angles with the tracks and to replace the missing forward wheels with a heavy truck, made especially for the purpose, furnished with iron-shod wooden wheels, and fastened to the engine's bumper by an iron bolt serving as a linch pin. When the jacks were removed, the engine rested on the flange drivers and the wheels of the truck. A powerful chain formed the connecting link between the locomotive and the team of horses. This chain was fastened to the single, double, and "four-ble" trees, by means of which the horses pulled. The arrangement was very ingenious, and insured steady and united effort. The horses went four abreast, and the forty, when strung along in pulling position, covered the entire width of the road and over one hundred feet of its length. Probably no similar team had ever before been seen on an American road.

When all was in readiness, a teamster mounted one of each four horses, Longst gave the signal, the crack of ten whips rang out, and the locomotive's novel trip was begun. The offstart was merry and inspiring enough to such of the townspeople as happened to be in sympathy with the movement, and to the small boy, who was as usual present in force, it was an event keenly enjoyed and long to be remembered, an experience to be treasured along with that of donning the initial pair of long trousers, but to the sturdy band of workers who had the prize in charge, the trip was anything but a holiday jaunt.

The time made varied according to the state of the weather and the roads, the condition of the teams, and various other causes. Sometimes the whole distance to Winchester, eighteen miles, was made in a single day, while at others only three or four miles would be covered in the same time. The average time for the entire trip to Strasburg, thirty-eight miles south of Martinsburg, was three days. Often the macadam covering of the road would break through under the unwanted weight and let the iron monster down into the soft earth. Then there was hustling. The indispensable jackscrews came into use, and timbers were placed under the wheels, until after, perhaps, an hour's work a fresh start could be made. On levels, where there was good, solid road, and all went well, the teams proceeded at a fast walk; up the hills they generally went faster, because it was only by a good running start that they could get to the top at all. As it was, the big horses had to strain every muscle in ascending the grades.

Before the first trip was made a prospecting party went over the route and examined the bridges on the line of the pike. In most instances these were not equal to supporting a heavy locomotive and it was necessary to go into the woods, cut timber and strengthen them for the unusual burden. One of the hardest problems to solve was that of regulating the speed in descending hills. Just what the cyclist does for his wheel with his little spoon-shaped brake, the men in charge of the locomotive did for that unwieldy mass of iron, for had it once got beyond control on a sharp down grade nothing could have saved the horses or anything else that happened to be in the way. After considerable experiment and thought, the all-useful jackscrew was again called into requisition and used as a brake, being fastened to the engine frame and placed sidewise against the driving-wheel, and tightened or loosened as the necessity arose by a man who rode on the engine. It is hardly needful to add that this man's position was no sinecure.

The tenders were conveyed to Strasburg in the same manner as the engines, eight horses being employed to the team. Cars were not so much in demand as engines, but a number of these were taken in the same manner. They were not only used afterward for transporting war supplies on the Southern roads, but served the immediate purpose of carrying the detached portions of the locomotives.

When the engines reached Strasburg, they were placed on the tracks of the Manassas Gap road, which had the same gauge as the Baltimore and Ohio—five feet, eight and a half inches—by the process employed in taking them from the rails at Martinsburg, and the tenders having been attached, they were hauled, by means of other steam power, over the road mentioned and the Orange and Alexandria and Virginia Central roads to Richmond, the detached parts remaining in the cars. At Richmond they were assembled, and kept until all had been brought from the line of the Baltimore and Ohio. Nearly a year was occupied in conveying the seized locomotives, nineteen in all, from the Baltimore and Ohio to Richmond, most of them coming from Martinsburg, though a few of them were taken from Harper's Ferry and Duffields. The reason so long a period was covered in the collection of the seized stock was not continuously in the possession of the Confederates. Sometimes, by the fortunes of war, they were driven south of the Potomac, and when, perhaps, after months of skirmishing, they regained the lost ground, the interrupted work of conveying the rolling-stock was patiently and systematically resumed. Two or three of the locomotives which were started out of Martinsburg on the pike never got to Winchester, the Union forces having suddenly appeared upon the scene and driven off the party

engaged in hauling them. The attempt to convey them to Strasburg was never renewed, and they stood by the pike between Martinsburg and Winchester until recovered by the Baltimore and Ohio people at the close of the war, somewhat the worse for their exposure to the elements, but still capable, after repairs, of doing good service.

Some of the engines were the long, lean freight-haulers of the day; some were passenger locomotives; but the majority were of the now vanished "camelback" type, designed by Ross Winans of Baltimore. These "camelbacks" were sturdy pullers, and did excellent service in their time, but they were marveled of ugliness. The cab was perched on top of and well to the front of the high boiler, and the engineer stood almost over the front wheels. In Blind Tom's pianistic description of the "Battle of Manassas" he used to imitate, with that robust voice of his, the whistle of a "camelback," and weird and blood-curdling as was the sound emitted from his lips, it was but a faithful reproduction of the original.

Now and then the squad in "turnpiking" the engines found it advisable, in view of information received from scouts, to retire at night to Bunker Hill, a point well within the Confederate lines, to avoid the risk of capture, returning early next morning to resume operations. The loss of one of the skilled men would have been a far more serious affair than that of a private soldier, who was merely a fighter, or, perhaps, even that of a some of the commissioned officers. Notwithstanding the length of time over which the operations extended and the frequent proximity of the Union forces, there was never as much as a skirmish. To carry off bodily such a great mass of heavy material from points at intervals within the clutch of the opposing forces, without the loss of a single man, was indeed a remarkable feat.

The last time the "railroad corps" handled one of the captured locomotives was in the spring of 1862, when the Confederates evacuated Manassas, just after second Bull Run. At that time the "199" a "camelback," and the last of the engines to be taken from Martinsburg, was at Strasburg ready to be conveyed by the way of railroads to Richmond. The sudden move of the army rendered this impossible, as the direct route to the capital had been cut off; so the night of the evacuation the railroad force was ordered to get that "camelback" to Richmond by the only route left open, namely, the very circuitous one by way of Mount Jackson and Staunton. Accordingly the "199," which had already cost so much time and trouble, was put on the tracks of the Manassas Gap railroad and taken to Mount Jackson, a distance of twenty-five miles, and thence by way of the pike, a matter of seventy miles more, to Staunton, where it was again placed on the rails, this time those of the Virginia Central, and hauled to Richmond. The trip occupied about four days, and the movement was the most hurried and exciting of the series. Many bridges had to be strengthened en route, and in crossing some of them it was found necessary to substitute a block and fall for the horses. Staunton was reached early in the morning, and though it was scarcely daylight, the major portion of the population were up and out to see the novel cavalcade.

All the engines were kept at Richmond until the last one had been seized, the original intention having been to do the repairing and refitting there, but in May, 1862, when McClellan began his movement up the Peninsula and preparations to evacuate the capital were made, the dismantled locomotives and their dislocated members were among the very first freight started out of Richmond. To have allowed those precious "camelbacks" to fall into the hands of the Northern troops after such risks and the expenditure of so much time, ingenuity and labor, would have been galling indeed. Colonel Sharp, who had them in charge, directed Mr. Duke to hurry up the prizes by rail to a safe point in the South. They were accordingly taken to a place on the North Carolina Central Road, in Alamance county, North Carolina, about fifty miles west of Raleigh. The movement was successfully accomplished, and the engines found another temporary resting-place. Meantime the large shops building of the Raleigh and Gaston railroad at Raleigh were leased by the Southern Government, fitted up with improved machinery, and the "Confederate States Locomotive Shops" were established. The shops were ready for work by July, 1862, and the captured locomotives and the carloads of accessories were hauled back to Raleigh, and a large force of workmen began the refitting and repairing. As fast as ready the rehabilitated engines were turned over to the various Southern railroads, who purchased them from the Confederate States, readily paying for them by credits upon the government transportation accounts. The existence of the shops, which were extensive and fully equipped, was not generally known, and was one of the many evidences that the Confederate leaders, or at least some of them, realized that the war was to be no "three months' affair," but a long and hard struggle, and that the most systematic and thorough marshaling of resources and facilities was necessary. About ten months were occupied in turning out locomotives, and it was over eighteen months from the date of the first raid on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad before they were all in active use again. They proved highly valuable in subsequent operations, coming into use as they did when much of the Southern rolling-stock was completely worn out.

The long time covered, first in securing and transporting the rolling stock and afterwards in placing it in running order after the dismantling, showed no lack of skill or enterprise on the part of those engaged in the task (the fact that they accomplished it at all proved that they possessed those qualities in abundance), but is only evidence of the great and varied difficulties under which they labored. The delay was owing, in some degree, to the peculiar character of the mechanical obstacles to be overcome, but much more to the frequent changes in the positions of the contending armies. The "railroad corps" had always to follow the army.

The operations were not confined to the carrying off of cars and engines. The best portion of the equipment of the Raleigh shops, above described, including lathes, planers, drill-presses, and lat, but not lighter, a turn-table were all conveyed to Raleigh in cars, by the way of the pike and the railroads, from the Baltimore and Ohio roundhouse at Martinsburg. More than this, at a later period of the war, the "railroad corps," who seemed to have stopped at nothing, actually tore up and hauled away the ties, rails, chairs, and spikes forming about five miles of the Baltimore and Ohio road between Duffields and Kearneysville, and relaid it from Manassas Gap to Centerville, for the use of the army. Mr. Duke remembers, and relates with dry humor, how, after most strenuous efforts, this piece of track was got into position late Saturday evening, and how the very

next day, Sunday, it was captured by the Union forces. This episode occurred just prior to second Bull Run, and was a striking example of the extreme uncertainty of war movements.

It is generally understood that, after the war the Baltimore and Ohio railroad was returned by the United States Government for the damage and track material, as well as for the destruction of numerous bridges, etc., by the Southern forces. It is also reported, and generally believed, that a number of the locomotives were recovered by the road after the war and were used for some time in the regular service of the company. Colonel Sharp, who conducted the movements for the seizure of the rolling-stock, was not many years after the war, made master of transportation of the Baltimore and Ohio road, and filled that important position for a number of years under President John W. Garrett, who was at the head of the road during the war, and who was able to appreciate enterprise and ability, even when for a season directed against his own interests.

BANCROFT'S CRUISE.

(Continued from second page.)

two days in succession, and as the gunnery sergeant in charge of the marine guard, and I were supposed to alternate in going on liberty, I wished to take advantage of the opportunity knowing that the gunnery sergeant did not intend to go that day. There was an unwritten order that both the gunnery sergeant and myself could not go on liberty on the same day, he often going ashore on several nights in succession while the ship lay in Boston while I remained. I also informed the commanding officer that I wanted no privileges not granted the remainder of the ship's company, but did want the same privileges and was not getting them. This conversation continued for several minutes, I explaining my reason for requesting this liberty, and was brought to a close by the commanding officer telling me that his original decision was final. I then saluted and went forward. The following day I was called to the mast and informed by the commanding officer that I had been insolent to him and he had a good mind to give me a court-martial, to which I replied, "I do not think I have done anything to merit a court-martial, that if I had been insolent to him it was unintentional and that I apologized for it, that I always made it a point to show all officers, regardless of rank, every respect due them."

With a warning to me not to have the affair repeated, the case was dismissed, and, as I always considered, at an end. I also requested to be allowed to make application for my discharge by purchase, but the request was not granted.

The same day I was asked by Lieutenant Howard, executive officer, to tell him unofficially what the trouble was and to reconsider my intention of applying for my discharge. I informed him that my position was becoming unbearable, and that I could not put up with much more, as my stock of patience was about exhausted. I tried to illustrate to him the utter disregard of discipline, and showed that my authority over the crew was being weakened every day on account of not receiving any support from my commanding officer, due to the fact that men who committed themselves repeatedly, and some whose offenses were quite serious, often received less punishment than those who committed their first offense, or whose offense was of a less serious nature, thereby placing a premium on being an old offender. Lieutenant Howard said he had not thoroughly understood the condition of affairs prior to his reporting for duty on board this vessel, but would assist me in every possible manner in having discipline enforced rigidly. The report book and the ship's log can produce sufficient evidence to corroborate the part of this statement relating to offenses committed and punishments awarded.

The mental and physical strain caused by not having an assistant Master-at-Arms, having several times requested one, and the greater part of the time having only a skeleton marine guard, also having at times from one to ten prisoners to look after, and the fact that about half the time there was no corporal of the guard on duty, caused all of the police of the ship to fall on me, the gunnery sergeant being mailed orderly, and as a result often absent from the ship.

In addition to the above adverse conditions I had my other duties on a berth deck containing five berthing compartments to keep in order. I performed my duties to the best of my ability, being sober and vigilant from 1:45 a. m. to 9:15 p. m. daily when in port, except when out of the ship, a period of 16½ hours, and quite often remaining awake all night to prevent men from leaving the ship without authority, or smuggling liquor, or both, owing to the unreliability of some of the marine guard.

The quarterly marks on my enlistment record should show that my duty was done well, as they are of the best.

In reference to my wishing to leave the ship I would state that we have had five executive officers since August 11, 1899, when this vessel was commissioned, and I have often heard an officer make the following remark: "I wish to God I was out of this ship." If officers think so of her it surely cannot be a crime for an enlisted man to hold the same opinion, even though placed in writing in other words.

Upon leaving Boston at the commencement of this cruise several men were undergoing the following punishment for leaving the ship without authority, either directly or through baseball parties that were allowed to go up in the yard for practice—ten nights in double irons.

All of these men were released before the completion of their sentence, and one of the persons mentioned, an apprentice, has left the ship without authority repeatedly since then, and in each case was awarded slight punishment. On one occasion, while a prisoner at large, and having yet several days of confinement to do, he was allowed to go on liberty, and upon his return the remainder of the sentence was remitted. On another occasion this same apprentice was brought to the mast by me about 7 p. m., when the commanding officer said: "This makes about twenty times that you have disobeyed my orders," and punished him as follows, to stand on the quarter deck in charge of the cabin orderly till midnight.

In the body of my application I cite several cases of men oversteering liberty for longer periods than I did and only received class punishment in accordance with the commanding officer's schedule in vogue at that time. Solitary confinement on bread and water was considered a sinecure, owing to the locality of the brig and the fact that no sentry was ever placed over it, and was sought rather than avoided, by some of the crew. A colored apprentice while in double irons on the quarter deck, became very insubordinating toward Sergeant Horvath, threw

belaying pins and other missiles at him, called him a number of unmentionable names, and threatened to knock his head off, all this occurring in the presence of the commanding officer and many members of the crew, and no action was taken in the matter. Another apprentice refused to take a number of vile names, invited him to do off his coat and he would lick him. The apprentice was confined for safe keeping and no further action taken. An ordinary seaman overstayed his liberty ninety-six hours, returned, and a few days later left the ship without authority, remained absent one hundred and seventy-nine hours, and was awarded solitary confinement for five (5) days on bread and water, and special fourth-class. After being confined for three days he was released from solitary confinement and placed in double irons, instead, he thereupon left the ship the same evening with the irons on and returned a day or so later without them, having thrown them away after going ashore. He was entered on the ship's log "recommended for trial by general court-martial, but was never tried."

The above all took place within twenty-five days.

About fourteen or fifteen of the crew left ship without authority, while I was under suspension, and upon returning were placed in double irons. Some of the above men were on duty as anchor watch. Several of the men used very vile language to the officer of the deck. A private of marines assaulted the gunnery sergeant in charge of the guard. All of the above mentioned cases were reported to the commanding officer who had the men appear before him at the "mast" and recommended some for general courts-martial, some for summary courts-martial, while some of the less serious offenses he would punish himself. None of the above men were ever tried, as upon our arrival at Hampton Roads, Va., the commanding officer told the men that owing to the ship being ordered out of commission no further action was taken. After our arrival in Boston the men received class punishment.

The above is an excellent illustration of what I had to contend with in maintaining the discipline of the ship, and was my chief reason for wishing to leave this vessel for another where discipline was more rigidly enforced, and my position as chief of police of the ship, at least respected.

The forward part of this ship, during the period of time of the last cases cited, was in such an uproar that a madhouse could not compare with it, and every sober man on the ship was disgusted.

I hope the department will not look upon this statement as a criticism of anyone's action. It is not intended so, but merely to explain why I desired to leave the ship. If possible to do so, I request that the following records and documents be examined so that my statements may be corroborated viz: The ship's log, report book, punishment reports (now on file at the Bureau of Navigation) my enlistment record, showing quarterly marks and recommendations, such documents as I mentioned in the body of my statement, and Gunnery Sergeant Horvath.

Some of the officers conversant with the conditions mentioned herein are on duty elsewhere, and I do not wish to place the Department to the trouble of summoning them unless absolutely necessary.

Very respectfully,

MARTIN JACOBSON,

Chief Master-at-Arms, U. S. Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

As an illustration of the esteem in which this outraged seaman was held by the officers under whom he served, where discipline was maintained and where the officers were gentlemen as well as sailors, we reproduce the following:

U. S. S. CAESAR.

SAN JUAN, PORTO RICO, August 27, 1899.

I have known Martin Jacobson, chief Master-at-Arms U. S. Navy, for several years. He was under my command on the U. S. S. "Yesomite" for several months; also blacksmith on the "Thetis," of which ship I was navigator. In both instances I found him to be sober, reliable, capable, and a man of most excellent character.

F. E. SAWYER,

Lieut.-Com'd'r U. S. Navy, Commanding.

Martin Jacobson was in Washington all of the past week vainly seeking redress at the Navy Department. He was advised by a friendly officer to apply to Lieutenant Cottman, the officer who some time ago insulted an applicant for re-enlistment with the remark, "You look as if you didn't have a square meal for a month." When Jacobson attempted to explain his grievance to this well-fed and highly groomed officer and tax eater with a request that the stigma of a dishonorable discharge from a service to which he had given almost ten of the best years of his life be removed and his record made clean, Cottman sneered out his fat chest and in a voice tremulous with anger he exclaimed: "Why if I was the Commander of the Bancroft I would have hanged you to the yard arm!" And then Cottman looked to see if Jacobson had dwindled with fright into nothingness. But Jacobson, compact and powerfully built, stood smilingly in front of the terrible Lieutenant and replied: "You think, perhaps, you would, but you know you wouldn't—and couldn't. This is a Republic yet Mr. Lieutenant, and I am your peer as a citizen and American born freeman."

Mr. Jacobson left for Cincinnati failing to secure redress at the Navy Department, and proposes to bring the matter before Congress at its incoming session, when it is more than probable a committee of investigation into the cruise or rather the orgies on board the Bancroft will be the result. That Congress will take some action on this disgraceful cruise of an American war vessel there is hardly a doubt, and Commander Adams, now on the Alert, will be called upon to defend his commission as an officer of the United States Navy.

Hindoo Feast on Locusts.

Those familiar with the Bible statement, "Their meat was locusts and wild honey," have often wondered if any people to-day feast on locusts. It seems that recently a flight of locusts passed over Calcutta. Numbers fell by the wayside and were eagerly eaten by voracious crows and kites. Others, again, were gathered in baskets by the little native boys and taken home for currying purposes. The lower classes in India enjoy this delicacy, perhaps because it is cheap. It is stated by those who know that locust curries taste very much like that of prawn curries.

A strange story is told by an exchange. While a wind-mill roof was being overhauled near Beaucaire, France, the mummified body of a pigeon was found. Attached to a wing was a quill containing a missive dated 1870, which read: "Darling, all well, but starving. P. P. G." The pigeon was most likely one of the homers released in Paris during the siege.

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