

“These hurried but admirably-worded dispatches were sent by the same express to both General Harrison and the secretary of the navy.

“Then the ceremony of taking possession of the conquered vessels, and receiving the formal submission of the vanquished, was performed. Perry gave the signal to anchor, and started for his battered flag-ship, determined, on her deck, and in the presence of her surviving officers and crew, to receive the commanders of the captured squadron.”

“‘It was a time of conflicting emotions,’ says Surgeon Usher Parsons, ‘when he stepped upon deck. The battle was won and he was safe, but the deck was slippery with blood, and strewn with the bodies of twenty officers and men, seven of whom had sat at table with us at our last meal, and the ship resounded everywhere with the groans of the wounded. Those of us who were spared and able to walk met him at the gangway to welcome him on board, but the salutation was a silent one on both sides; not a word could find utterance.’”

“The next movement in the solemn drama was the reception of the British officers, one from each of the captured vessels. Perry stood on the after-part of the deck, and his sad visitors were compelled to pick their way to him among the slain. He received them with solemn dignity and unaffected kindness. As they presented their swords, with the hilts toward the victor, he spoke in a low but firm tone, without the betrayal of the least exultation, and requested them to retain their weapons. He inquired, with real concern, about Commodore Barclay, and his fellow-sufferers from severe wounds; and he made every captive feel, at that sad and solemn moment, the thrill of pleasure excited by the conduct of a Christian gentleman in the moment of adversity of the recipient of his kindness. * * * *

“When this sad ceremony was over, the conqueror, exhausted by the day’s work, upon which he had entered with a fever-enfeebled body, lay down upon the deck in the midst of his dead companions, and, surrounded by prisoners, and with his hands folded over his breast, and his drawn sword held in one of them, he slept as sweetly as a child. * * * *

“The light of the morning of the eleventh revealed sad sights to the eyes of the belligerents. The vessels of both squadrons were dreadfully shattered, especially the two flag-ships. Sixty-eight persons had been killed and one hundred and ninety wounded during the three hours that the battle had lasted. Of these, the Americans lost one hundred and twenty-three, twenty-seven of whom were killed; the British lost one hundred and thirty-five, forty-one of whom were killed.”

The fiery ordeal through which the flag-ship *Lawrence* passed is disclosed

¹ Surgeon Parsons relates that Captain Perry’s first remark on regaining the *Lawrence* was addressed to Purser Hambleton, when he said: “The prayers of my wife have prevailed in saving me.”