

writes in a popular style, but here in like manner the amount of text offered us in this installment is far too scanty for judgment. We observe, however, that he does not write the Egyptian form of the name Chefredun uniformly—"Chafra" on the first page, but "Khafra" elsewhere; also, that he quotes Mr. Petrie as rendering the words *nofer nuter, neb khau* by "the good god, the king of the two lands," in which either Mr. Petrie must be wrongly transcribed or himself guilty of the slip, for *neb khau* means 'King of Diadems,' while 'King of the Two Lands' would be *neb tau*.

—The aim of the 'New English Dictionary,' now for four years in publication at Oxford, is of the highest. It aspires, in "regard to each individual word, to show what new uses have arisen and when; to illustrate these facts by a series of quotations ranging down from the first-known occurrence of the word," etc. Seldom has it fallen below its high aim, as we have been glad to testify again and again on the appearance of each of its successive parts. But sometimes Homer nods. The word "capitol" affords one instance. In one transferred sense this word is defined, "The edifice occupied by the Congress of the United States in their deliberations." To illustrate this meaning we have the following: "1843 *Penny Cycl.* xvii, 98. The President's house is situated at the opposite extremity of Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol." Only this and nothing more. The year one thousand eight hundred and forty-three was the first occurrence of the sense above mentioned known to Dr. Murray and his lexicographical staff. This era was the thirty-first year after British troops had burnt the Capitol in Washington, and were described by their Chaplain Gleg (p. 139) as "gathered on the Capitol Hill." But the occurrence of the word "capitol" to mean a building for the Congressional deliberations is much older than 1814; it is older than the erection of such a building in the first years of this century. On October 1 (1793) Jefferson writes: "Dr. Thornton's plan of a Capitol has been produced, and has captivated the eyes and judgments of all" (Works, iii, p. 508). More than this—in the lowest deep a lower deep—on April 10, 1791, Jefferson writes about "preparing plans for the Capitol" (iii, p. 237). It seems to Yankees rather hard that their Capitol should remain for more than forty years ignored by the very foes who burned it down. In truth, they might well be glad to forget that act of savagery.

—In respect to the other American signification of the word "capitol," namely "the state-house, or house in which the Legislature holds its sessions," the 'New Dictionary' is still more deficient. This new use of the word is illustrated by no quotation whatever. There is nothing to show either when it arose, or whether it gave rise to the national meaning of the word or was derived from it, or from what other source. But, since "capitol" has become to Americans—or at least to the politicians among them—a magic word no less than was "glory" to Frenchmen under the first Napoleon, these points deserve elucidation. The name was given to a state-house earlier than to any national edifice. Jefferson, in his 'Notes,' written in 1781, mentions "the Capitol of Virginia at Williamsburg" (p. 221); but the word had the same import there long before Jefferson was born. In 1699 the state-house in Virginia having been burnt, the Assembly passed "an act directing the building the Capitol," etc. (Henning, Statutes, vol. iii, p. 197). In 1705, after providing for a site for the building, it was ordained "that the said building shall for-

ever be called and known by the name of the Capitol." Where the Virginian legislators obtained the word "capitol" in the sense of government-house, it may not be possible to ascertain. The word, however, had been used in that political sense, in English, as early as 1653 by Sir Thomas Urquhart, in his translation of Rabelais ('Gargantua,' §§ 2-6), "The cake-makers went to the Capitol of Picrochele." Some Old Dominion planter must have read Rabelais. But the translator had very slightly changed the original *capitoly*, written by Rabelais about 1535, and that word then and immemorably had been borne by the state-house in Toulouse. It seems clear that, from the era of Roman conquest, capitol in Provence meant government-house. Du Cange quotes Aulus Gellius as saying that the colonies were a sort of images of the Roman people, and so had theatres, baths, and capitols ("Erant colonie quasi effigies Romani Populi, eoque jure habebant theatra, thermas, capitolia"). The word "capitol" as a state-house has largely died out abroad, and in Great Britain never had any currency; but in our Greater Britain it has become as potent a vocable as palace or parliament-house ever was anywhere. It was therefore worthy of a less perfunctory treatment than it has received from the all-embracing dictionary of the English Philological Society.

FRANCE AND THE CONFEDERATE NAVY.

France and the Confederate Navy. An International Episode. By John Bigelow. Harper & Bros.

MR. BIGELOW's modest little book has a far higher value as history than many more pretentious volumes that bear the name. What he playfully terms an "international episode" was in truth a diplomatic intrigue of the first magnitude, in respect to the parties concerned in it as well as in the interests at stake. It was nothing less than the attempt of the Confederacy, with the active coöperation of the Emperor Napoleon III., to make France play the same part for the Confederates that she played in 1778 for the Revolutionary colonies. The story has up to this time remained buried in the captured Confederate archives, where no one seems to have thought of looking for it until Mr. Bigelow unearthed it. Parts of it were known to the individual actors, and one of these, Capt. Bulloch, the Confederate naval representative in England, has published his narrative; but, though an active and important agent, he was only a subordinate, and there was much with which he was unacquainted. Mr. Bigelow himself played no insignificant part in the story, seeing that he was the chief instrument in bringing the intrigue to nought, but his actual knowledge of the facts at the time was confined to what was essential for carrying his point—the rest he could only surmise; and even with such piecing out as Bulloch's subsequent account afforded, his story was incomplete until he obtained the Slidell-Benjamin correspondence. This filled in all the remaining gaps, and the result is like a child's puzzle, where the scattered and misshapen parts, put together by expert hands, reveal an unexpectedly perfect picture.

When Capt. Bulloch, from his agency at Liverpool, in the summer of 1862, accomplished the extraordinary feat of getting the *Alabama* to sea, in spite of the protests and the evidence of her character submitted by the American Minister, he was in reality killing the goose that laid his golden eggs. The notoriety of the incident, and the strong light that was thrown upon everything and everybody con-

nected with it, exposed Bulloch's methods, while the long vistas of diplomatic controversy which each capture of the cruiser with its accompanying bill for damages opened out to her Majesty's Government, quickened even the Palmerston Ministry to a sense of neutral obligation. Bulloch continued his ship-building, but with many misgivings. Early in 1863 he perceived indications that the completion of the Lairds' rams would be attended with serious difficulty, and the seizure of the *Alexandra* in April increased his apprehensions. The apprehensions proved to be well founded; for though the *Alexandra* was finally released, the protracted trials kept her in durance until she could no longer be of any service, and in the following September the rams were effectually headed off by Mr. Adams's famous ultimatum. Nor was any ship-of-war ever afterwards constructed for the Confederates in England.

Bulloch had originally selected England in preference to France as the locality of his agency, because it afforded greater freedom of action, a cheaper market, and a clearer and surer knowledge of the limitations imposed by the law. The French neutrality proclamation was rigorous in its provisions, and although the Emperor was thought to be well-disposed towards the Confederates, it was likely that his disposition would depend mainly on their failure or success. Bulloch was therefore satisfied to confine his operations to England. In the latter part of 1862, however, when he saw that sooner or later he might be compelled to shift his ground, the urgent representations of Slidell, the Confederate Commissioner in Paris, led him to turn to the Continent. Slidell's report was more than encouraging. He had received most positive assurances from the highest sources that the naval projects of the Confederates would not be interfered with in France, and that any plausible representation of the builders, holding out a fictitious destination of the vessels, would be accepted by the Government.

The Cabinet at Richmond eagerly concurred in Slidell's views. Secretary Mallory of the Navy Department would thus be enabled to get his ships, and Secretary Benjamin of the State Department looked for a still more important advantage in the prospect of embroiling France with the United States. The authorization to proceed with the ships was accordingly despatched to Bulloch. The plan could not be carried out immediately, as the finances of the Confederacy were passing through one of those critical stages which unavoidably recurred at intervals, and the funds in the Liverpool Sub-Treasury were at a low ebb. In the spring of 1863, however, the Erlanger loan was floated. The method by which this was done is tersely described by Mr. Bigelow, who gives Mason's London despatches as his *pièces justificatives*. From these it appears that Mason, upon the advice of Erlanger, who was placing the bonds, authorized the latter to expend £1,500,000, or half the total amount of the loan, in "bulling" the market, in consequence of which fictitious operation the bonds advanced $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

Bulloch now had money enough to begin, and in April he concluded a contract for four corvettes with Arman, a shipbuilder of Bordeaux. Arman, like Laird in England, was a member of the Legislature, and something of a personage, or at least on friendly terms with personages, and he too had secured his assurances. Accordingly, his application for permission to build the four steamers, with batteries of fourteen thirty-pounder guns; for trade in the Pacific, obtained a cordial assent from the Minister of Marine, whose professional intelligence

apparently received no shock at learning that merchant steamers required this formidable protection against the pirates of the China Seas. Emboldened by their success, and by renewed "assurances," Slidell and Bulloch made a further contract with Arman in June, for two heavily armored rams. Work on the six vessels began immediately after the closing of the contracts, two of the corvettes being sublet to M. Voruz, a shipbuilder of Nantes.

Until Mr. Bigelow brought to light the Confederate archives at Washington, no one, except the parties directly concerned, knew exactly what was the nature of the "assurances" received by Slidell, upon which he and Bulloch acted. Even Bulloch was ignorant of them, or at least professed to be, when he published his history in 1884. Mr. Bigelow's documents tell the whole story, and they tell it in Slidell's own words. Apart from its intrinsic interest as the history of Confederate diplomacy, it throws a valuable side-light upon the character and methods of the Emperor—methods which present a singular mixture of candor and duplicity, actuated solely by self-interest. First and last, he gave Slidell three interviews. The Confederate Commissioner knew his man, and in the conferences used little subterfuge. In fact, the unblushing directness in which these two—the "high concocting parties," as Mr. Bigelow aptly terms them—unmasked themselves in their negotiations, is not the least remarkable among the extraordinary revelations of the book. In the second interview, at St. Cloud, in October, 1862, the Emperor himself led up to the subject of ship-building by asking why the Confederates had not created a navy. Slidell promptly replied that the Southern leaders had not at the start favored a naval development, but that they now saw their error, and were endeavoring to correct it by building vessels; "that the great difficulty was, not to build, but to man and arm them, under the existing regulations for the preservation of neutrality; that if the Emperor would give only some kind of verbal assurance that his police would not observe too closely when we wished to put on board guns and men, we would gladly avail ourselves of it." To which the Emperor replied, with delightful candor, "Why could you not have them built as for the Italian Government? I do not think it would be difficult, but *I will consult the Minister of Marine about it.*"

It would be hard to find, in the annals of modern statecraft, a parallel for this monumental piece of imperial knavery. At this very time the Emperor, through his Ministers, was making professions to the United States of the strictest neutrality, as indeed his proclamation, apart from any further assurances, sufficiently indicated; while in a private interview with the Confederate Commissioner he was assenting to the baldest propositions for its violation, and even volunteering to consult his Minister as to the subterfuge by which his own edict could be safely evaded, and the conditions upon which he would himself connive at the evasion!

The third interview between Slidell and the Emperor occurred eight months later, in June, 1863, about the time that the contract for the rams was concluded. The same agreeable frankness was maintained between them in reference to the ship-building conspiracy. Indeed, Slidell's report of the interview treats the question rather as a matter of course, a thing touched upon by the way, about which the most perfect understanding should exist, and in fact existed. "I expressed my thanks to him," so his narrative reads, "for his sanction of the contracts made for the building of

the four ships-of-war at Bordeaux and Nantes. I then informed him that we were prepared to build several ironclad ships-of-war, and that it only required his verbal assurance that they should be allowed to proceed to sea under the Confederate flag, to enter into contracts for that purpose. He said that we might build the ships, but it would be necessary that their destination should be concealed." At this Slidell demurred a little, but presently withdrew his point; and thus this precious agreement was concluded, by which the Emperor, who had by proclamation forbidden his subjects "to concur in any manner in the equipment or armament of ships-of-war" of either belligerent, secretly consented to the delivery of "several" ironclads to the Confederate agents, on the sole condition that the scheme should not be found out.

Unfortunately for the success of the conspiracy, the agents were unable to fulfil the conditions. Two months after the bargain was completed, and when the construction of the six ships was well advanced, Mr. Bigelow, at this time the Consul-General of the United States at Paris, received a visit from a man whom he designates as "M. X." "M. X." appears to have been one of those professional spies who make a substantial living in Europe as political "fences"—receivers of stolen goods in the way of State secrets. This gentleman, in the prosecution of his worthy occupation, had become possessed of a series of original letters and papers which had passed between Arman, Voruz, Slidell, Bulloch, and Erlanger in reference to the ships, which he offered to dispose of to Mr. Bigelow for 20,000 francs. As the documents were clearly genuine and the proof they contained overwhelming, and as the proposed fleet, if it ever got to sea, would work untold mischief to this country, Mr. Bigelow wisely concluded that the information was cheap at the price—in fact, it would have been cheap at almost any price—and closed at once. The documents were delivered to Mr. Dayton, the American Minister, and were by him immediately laid before M. Drouyn de Lhuys, the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Never was there a more complete exposure. The correspondence proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that a gigantic scheme was on foot to create a Confederate fleet in direct violation of the prohibitions of the French neutrality laws and of the Emperor's proclamation. The circumstances could not fail to suggest a suspicion that the Government itself was compromised. About this, of course, nothing was said in Mr. Dayton's protest. M. Drouyn de Lhuys affected great surprise at the revelation, and perhaps not without reason, for he was probably not aware of the full extent of the Emperor's complicity. He at once assured Mr. Dayton that the ships would not be permitted to sail, and he presently caused the withdrawal of the authorization given by the Minister of Marine. He even went so far in carrying out his part in the diplomatic *opéra bouffe* as gently to upbraid his colleague for having given the permission, to which the latter innocently replied that he "was obliged to believe the statement of the contractor that the vessels were for service in the China Seas, and it was well known that vessels in these waters required a certain armament."

Meanwhile the Emperor kept prudently in the background. Obviously it would have been wise for the Confederate Commissioner to have done likewise. He had nothing to complain of, for the Emperor had done all that he had promised, and the exposure of the plot had made it impossible for him to go further, as indeed he had cautioned Slidell beforehand.

But this, apparently, Slidell could not understand, and, with an almost inconceivable effrontery, he addressed a letter to the Emperor, intimating that the imperial Ministers, without their master's knowledge, were interfering with the ships, and expressing "entire confidence" that his Majesty, upon learning the fact, "will take the necessary steps to prevent it"; which, he, Slidell, was unable to do, owing to the confidential character of the Emperor's communications to him. He added that he was induced to write, because the subject involved "not only vital interests of the Government which he represents, but very grave and delicate personal responsibilities for himself." The letter, as might be expected, failed of its object, and, as Mr. Bigelow suggests, it is not surprising that Slidell never had another official interview with the Emperor.

There is little doubt that Napoleon III., even after the affair was exposed, would have been willing enough to let the ships go, if the Confederacy had shown any signs of increasing strength; not on account of the "delicate personal responsibilities" of any individual, but because it accorded with his policy. He coquetted with the question for six months, during which the building went on, until finally Mr. Seward sent a sharp despatch which demanded immediate attention. The contractors were then ordered to sell the ships, and in a short time all of them had been disposed of to foreign governments. One ram, the *Stonewall*, was sold to Denmark, and subsequently came into Bulloch's possession, but under circumstances for which France could not be held responsible. She was too late to be of any use to the Confederacy, and was laid up at Havana, and ultimately delivered to the United States.

This is in substance the remarkable story that Mr. Bigelow has to tell, and he has told it well. In form, his book is primarily a documentary study, three-fourths of its space being taken up by official papers; but the author's narrative, drawn largely from his personal experience, and enlivened with much caustic observation and incisive comment, connects the documents and fills out the gaps in the story. In this way he has produced a work which is not only of the first importance to students, but full of interest for everybody; while it has the special merit of giving his personal views, and at the same time presenting *in extenso* the evidence upon which the views are founded.

RECENT NOVELS.

The Story of an African Farm. By Ralph Iron (Olive Schreiner). Boston: Cupples & Hurd; and Roberts Bros.

With the Immortals. By F. Marion Crawford. Macmillan & Co.

An Iceland Fisherman. By Pierre Loti. Translated from the French by Clara Cadot. W. S. Gottsberger.

It is no longer an open question whether the novelist shall be at once a story-teller, a critic of life, and an authoritative commentator on its primitive mystery. He and the public have settled that controversy, and he is now an autocratic judge of his own proper license and limitation. So it has come to pass that, no matter what incidental distractions the novelist who appeals to intelligence may permit himself, he elects chiefly to discourse with gravity on the beginnings of things, and to interpret sagely the humanly unknowable. Since the choice is his own, he doubtless gets much gratification out of the pose philosophical; but it sometimes seems as if the public had sold him a precious