



A FAMOUS SEA-FIGHT.

THE ENGAGEMENT IN 1879 OFF THE BOLIVIAN COAST BETWEEN PERUVIAN AND CHILEAN IRONCLADS.

BY CLAUDE H. WETMORE.

THE Chile-Peruvian war of 1879 was the result of a quarrel over the nitrate-beds near Antofagasta, Bolivia. Chile claimed a treaty right for her merchants to work these lodes, and upon Bolivia denying the jurisdiction, the southern republic seized the port in question. In 1875 Peru had entered into a secret alliance with Bolivia to resent any such act, and Antofagasta was no sooner in the possession of the Chileans than President Prado convened the Peruvian Congress, and on April 2, 1879, war was formally declared.

It is a matter of dispute which side had the balance of power on that date. Many of the results of the six months following can now be traced to an element of luck, and to the stupidity of one or two men in power in Peru. The allies certainly threw more troops into the field than did the enemy, while Peru's navy—Bolivia not possessing so much as a tug to steam out of her one seaport—was

almost equal to the Chilean. The total of the latter's fighting tonnage was 13,124; that of the Peruvians, 10,084. Three army divisions were formed, Peru and Bolivia mustering about one hundred thousand against a Chilean army of sixty or seventy thousand.

The Chilean navy comprised the sister ironclads *Blanco Encalada* and *Almirante Cochrane*, the wooden sloop of war *Esmeralda*,—which vessel must not be confused with the more modern ship of the same name that was sold to Japan two years ago,—the wooden corvettes *O'Higgins*, *Chacabuco*, *Abtao*, and *Magellanes*, and the gun-boat *Covadonga*.

Peru had afloat the ironclad *Independencia*, the turret-ship *Huascar*, two monitors constructed after the Ericsson

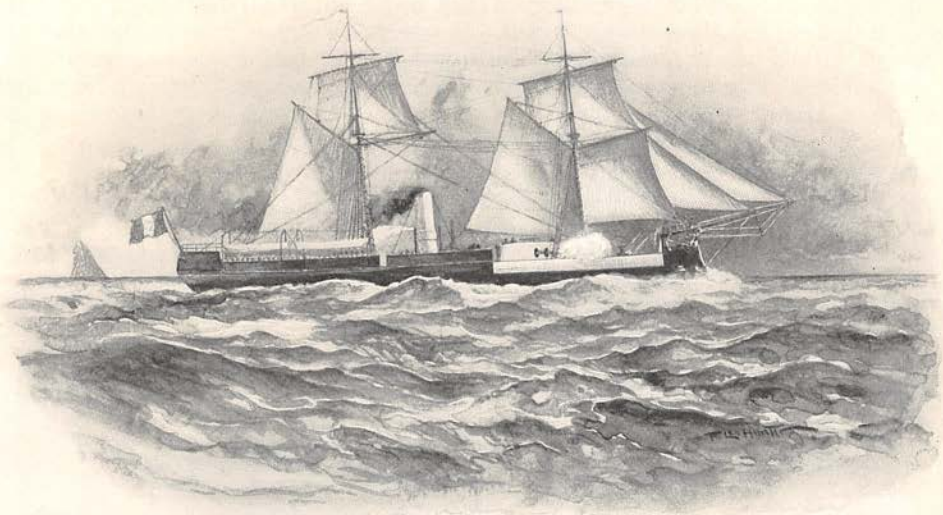
"cheese-box" type,—the *Atahualpa* and the *Manco Capac*,—the corvette *Union*, the gunboat *Pilcomayo*, and several transports. Peru's first invitation



DRAWN BY FRANCIS DAY, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN LIMA SIX MONTHS BEFORE ADMIRAL GRAU'S DEATH.

ADMIRAL MIGUEL GRAU.

"Absent, but accounted for. He is with the heroes."



DRAWN BY F. LEO HUNTER.

THE PERUVIAN IRONCLAD «HUASCAR.»

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN CALLAO, 1878.

to do battle on land was not accepted, and the army in the south was unmolested. Then a Peruvian fleet put to sea. On one of the ships was President Prado, who had decided to go to Arica and take active command of the allied forces. The fleet consisted of the *Huascar*, the *Independencia*, the *Union*, the *Limenia*, and the *Pilcomayo*. Admiral Grau, an able officer who was a graduate of the French Naval Academy, was placed in command, with the *Huascar* as his flag-ship. Captain Moore, a half-breed, commanded the *Independencia*. Grau steamed well out to sea until the latitude of Arica was reached, then made for port.

About the same day that the squadron departed from Callao, Rear-Admiral Reboledo Williams was despatched from Valparaiso with every available boat of the Chilean navy. He was ordered to take an inshore course and make for Callao, with the expectation of catching the Peruvian ships at anchor and unprepared. The result was that the Chilean ships appeared off Callao during the night of May 21. Admiral Williams reconnoitered the port, and then left; for his discovery of the departure of the Peruvian fleet caused him to feel alarm for the defenseless ports of his country.

On the outward voyage Williams had left the *Esmeralda* and the *Covadonga* at Iquique as a blockading squadron. On the return

trip he hastened to Valparaiso with the *Blanco* and the *Cochrane*, believing the Peruvians to be in the south, and stood well out to sea, again missing the enemy's fleet, which had appeared off Valparaiso, discovered that the Chileans had gone, and had returned north, Grau entertaining similar fears to those that had caused Williams to leave Callao. Had this naval game of hide-and-seek resulted in the fleets meeting, the history of South America would probably have been another story.

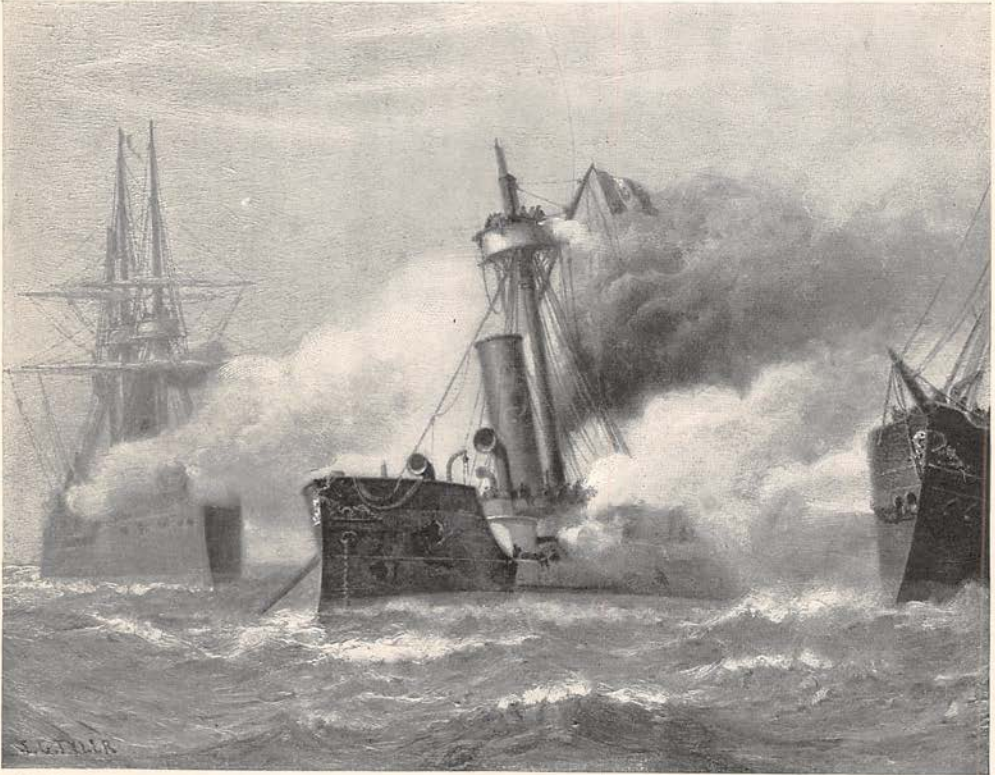
After leaving Valparaiso, Grau visited all the sea-coast towns till Iquique was reached, and there he sighted the two wooden ships of the enemy. Captain Moore was ordered to attack the *Covadonga*, and the *Huascar* forthwith gave battle to the *Esmeralda*.

It was a wooden sloop of war against an ironclad; and the thousands who gathered on the beach in front of Iquique, surprised that the former did not at once surrender, expected a short and fierce conflict as a sequel; but instead they witnessed a battle of nearly four hours' duration. There was a heavy swell running, and the *Huascar* rolled so that her fire was almost useless. During two hours and a half only two of her shells struck the sloop, and they were buried in her soft wood and did no harm. The Chilean ship had chosen a position close inshore, her commander, Arturo Pratt, seeking shallow water

in order to avoid being rammed by the enemy, and also taking that location because the *Huascar's* shells would fly into the town. However, he was finally compelled to abandon this position, for the Peruvian artillerists dragged a field-battery down to the beach, and opened fire at five hundred yards. As the *Esmeralda* steamed out of range of these pieces, Grau ordered full speed on

ple, and jumped on the deck of the Peruvian vessel, there to die as did the man whose courage he emulated.

The third attempt to ram was successful, and, under full speed, the *Huascar* struck the *Esmeralda* so squarely amidships that the ironclad had only time to back away before the sloop went down. She sank bow first, and as the stern still hung above the waves



DRAWN BY J. G. TYLER.

THE «HUASCAR» DRIFTING BETWEEN THE FIRE OF THE «ALMR. COCHRANE» AND THE «BLANCO ENCALADA.»

the *Huascar*, and steered for the wooden ship in order to use his ram. The blow that was struck proved a weak one, the *Huascar's* speed being checked too soon, and instead of a hull-destroying shock the ships simply ran foul of each other, and remained with sides touching for several minutes. During this contact Captain Pratt called for boarders, and sprang on the deck of the *Huascar*, where he was at once shot down. Only one man followed, and he tumbled over the side, wounded, just as the ships parted.

After backing off half a mile the *Huascar* again tried to ram, but again the engines were stopped too soon. This collision did no damage, and before the ships cleared, Lieutenant Serrano followed his captain's exam-

the notes of the Chilean national anthem, played by a band that had maintained its position on the quarter-deck, were heard by those on shore. The last thing to disappear below the surface was the flag that had been nailed to the mast.

The *Huascar's* boats were called away, but so bitter was the feeling of enmity that the men in the water tried to fight their would-be rescuers with knives that they had armed themselves with at the last moment. The Peruvians retaliated, and although there may be no truth in the stories that several sailors had their arms severed at the wrist as they seized the rowers' oars, and that many a poor fellow was hit over the head as he came to the surface, it is a fact that of three hun-

dred men who were on board the sloop over one half were lost.

The *Huascar* suffered but little as a result of this conflict, and as soon as the boats were recalled Grau started in the wake of the *Independencia*, which had disappeared around a point of land in her pursuit of the *Covadonga*.

The little ironclad had no sooner rounded this promontory than the lookout sighted a wreck ahead, which the officers made out to be the spars of a vessel rising to the height of only thirty feet above water, and a network of rigging that, standing in silhouette against the horizon, swarmed with men. Again the boats were called away, but Grau did not need their return to learn what had happened, for marine glasses told him that the *Independencia* was a total loss.

In his eagerness to overtake the little craft which he pursued, Captain Moore had allowed the light-draft Chilean to coax him into shallow water, where his ship struck a reef, to sink within half an hour after she was backed off. Of course the *Covadonga* made good her escape, and away she went to Valparaiso, bearing the news that Peru's most powerful ironclad lay beneath the sea. Thus the battle of Iquique, which to those in the city appeared a Peruvian victory, was turned into a defeat.

Grau at once steamed for Callao, where he arrived on June 7. Those versed in naval matters shook their heads when they heard of the loss of the *Independencia*, but the populace considered the battle of Iquique a victory. Grau was fêted, and Congress raised him to the rank of rear-admiral (he had been acting rear-admiral prior to this date, with the rank of captain). At his request, however, he was allowed to remain in command of the *Huascar*.

When the week's festivities had passed, and the Peruvians had looked about them, they took a different view of the situation, and those who were well informed conceded that Peru's sole hope at sea lay in the *Huascar*. Anchored out in the bay were the monitors *Atahualpa* and *Manco Capac*. These boats (formerly the United States ships *Catawba* and *Aneota*) were purchased from the United States early in the seventies, and were then deemed invulnerable. At the outbreak of the war they were classed among Peru's most formidable ships, and were feared by the Chileans more than were the *Huascar* and the *Independencia*; but practical tests soon dispelled the illusion. It was found that, owing to the antiquated engines, the monitors were of no use in a seaway, and

would fall a prey to even a nimble-footed gunboat that could choose its own distance; so they became mere floating batteries, and did not figure in the subsequent events. At this stage, also, orders were issued that the *Chalaco* and *Limena* should be used only as transports, so far as naval warfare was concerned. It therefore became virtually a contest between the *Huascar*, *Union*, and *Pilcomayo* for the Peruvians, and the *Blanco Encalada*, *Almirante Cochrane*, *O'Higgins*, *Chacabuco*, *Abtao*, *Magallanes*, and *Covadonga* for the Chileans. Or, to look at it from the standpoint of modern warfare, it seemed probable that all future contests would be between the *Huascar* and the Chilean sister ships.

In marked contrast with these vessels was the *Huascar*. The Chilean ships sat high in the water, and presented a considerable target to the enemy; but the Peruvian boat, even in a seaway, did not show more than six or seven feet of side, and when going into action all of her forward bulwarks could be lowered, exposing a turret and an armored deck that was almost flush with the water. Two entirely different classes of battle-ships were therefore represented by the vessels described. In all her dimensions the *Huascar* was smaller than the Chileans; her guns were a trifle larger, but this was more than offset by the numerical preponderance of the adversaries in the way of pieces.

After the return of the unfortunate naval expedition, attention was directed to the operation of the land forces. Within three months the allies met the Chilean advance near Tacna, but, to the shame of Bolivia, her men threw down their arms at the first gunfire, and fled into the interior, leaving Peru to fight out a quarrel of which Bolivia had been the cause. Then for a few months there was a cessation of hostilities, while preparations for a more decisive struggle were made by both sides.

Becoming tired of inactivity, Admiral Grau urged that President Prado allow him to take to the open again, and he finally gained consent to put to sea and harass the enemy. Grau was permitted to take out the *Huascar* and the *Union*, but was ordered to avoid an engagement with Chile's big ironclads.

The two war vessels left Callao harbor early in July, and for three months there came news of their destructive work on the Chilean coast. Grau would steam into a harbor of a morning with the *Huascar*, leaving the *Union* to watch in the offing, destroy all of the enemy's land works that could be

reached with his great guns between dawn and sunset, and leave shore before nightfall. In this manner he sank several coal-ships and did much damage to transports that lay at anchor, destroyed docks and public buildings in towns that showed resistance, and occasionally shelled a Chilean military camp.

The news of the *Huascar's* depredations caused much perturbation in Chile, and finally caused a cabinet crisis, which resulted in the appointment of a new minister of war. Numerous changes also took place in the personnel of the navy, the most important being the appointment of Commodore Rivero as rear-admiral in command of the fleet, to succeed Admiral Williams. The first active move was the despatch of Rivero, with the *Blanco*, the *Cochrane*, and several wooden ships, to put an end to such guerrilla warfare, and he was instructed to keep the ironclads as much as possible in consort. But Grau's manner of dodging in and out of ports, passing only a day in each, baffled the pursuers, and for a month they sought the Peruvians without success. Several times the *Union*, as she stood guard in the offing, signaled that smoke could be seen to the southward, and her consort put to sea. The low-lying hull of the *Huascar* enabled her to escape unobserved, and the corvette easily got away, for she was the fastest ship on the coast.

The destruction of unresisting objects soon ceased being exciting, and those on board the Peruvian vessel lost interest in the campaign, only to cheer up again when, on the second day of October, Grau announced his intention to return to Callao. It was time that he did so. The *Huascar's* bottom had become much fouled with the growth which accumulates rapidly in the South Pacific, and certain parts of the machinery were so worn that it was dangerous to proceed at full speed, eight knots an hour being about the best the little ironclad could do. The coal-supply was low, and for a fortnight no fuel-laden vessels of the enemy, from which the bunkers

could be filled, had been met. There were no fresh provisions on board,—it having been thought dangerous to send small boats ashore, for the appearance of an enemy meant precipitate retreat,—and scurvy was feared.

So the *Huascar's* bow was pointed northward, and at half speed Peru's ironclad steamed toward Callao. The Chilean coast was passed; the ship was off Bolivia's bit of sea-washed land. There a stop was made for a few hours, for Grau had heard that the *Cochrane* was in Antofagasta, broken down; but a reconnaissance proved his information to be false, and the *Huascar* continued on her way.¹

Sunset of October 7, 1879, was followed by a night regal in its splendor, and until a late hour the men thronged the fore-castle-deck, and the officers grouped together aft. There was only one theme of conversation—home. In four days they would be welcomed by those they loved; four days, and there would be an end to three months of toil, of sweating at the great guns while a tropic sun beat heat into the iron of the turret. The bit of frowning topgallant fore-castle-deck threw a shadow athwartships, astern of the bow. Partly within this, partly without, sat a group of seamen listening to music made by a fife, a violin, and a harmonica. There were North American and English born among them, and the notes of «Home, Sweet Home» floated seaward on a light, warm breeze that came lazily from the shore. The Peruvians lent their voices to the refrain; their rich notes swelled the volume of sound. The officers moved forward, and joined with the men. The ensign on the bridge paused in his measured tread. It was a pæan of thanksgiving that their labors were over.

As the moon sank into the sea the decks became deserted, and those who watched were the only ones to stand in silhouette against the blue-black of night. The wash of the waves at the ship's sides stirred to radiance myriads of the tiny creatures of the deep, and two lines, as bright as fire, ran

¹ It is believed that what follows is an accurate account of this memorable engagement. The writer was in Callao at the time, and saw the *Huascar* before the battle and soon after her capture, also the Chilean ships. The information regarding the conduct of the officers and men of the *Huascar* was secured from American and Peruvian survivors of the battle off Point Angamos. Lieutenant Simpson of the Chilean navy, when interrogated two years later in regard to the condition of the *Huascar* after the combat, said: «The crew were in a dreadful state of excitement and fear, imploring our men not to kill them. The officers had no control whatever over the crew.»

Far different was the report made by the *Huascar's*

survivors when they returned to Callao; and in view of the wonderful four hours' fight which the Peruvians had kept up, their story of the conditions of surrender is probably nearer the truth than the relations of the enemy.

This article was carefully revised by the late Captain Henry S. Wetmore and by William Carey Cole, U. S. N. The former, an ex-captain of United States artillery, was United States consul at Payta, Peru, and subsequently agent for the American Board of Marine Underwriters at Callao, where he was stationed during the entire war. He was a warm friend of Admiral Grau, and took breakfast with the admiral the day the *Huascar* sailed on her unfortunate trip.

parallel with the vessel. Her slow-churning propeller threw other phosphorescence high in air, and a golden shower fell, to broaden into a path that stretched as far astern as the eye could reach. A light swell from the Pacific caused the *Huascar* to roll slowly from side to side with a gentle rocking motion that lulled to sleep those who rested below.

Eight bells rang out, indicating the midnight hour, and a second lieutenant relieved the ensign who had stood the early watch. Then the hours passed slowly, as they do when the clock hands start on their downward march. Three o'clock came; then, after another half-hour, as the strokes of seven bells rang, the lookout on the forecastle glanced eastward, hoping for a view of the first glint of dawn. He paced up and down a few times, then came to a sudden stop and gazed ahead, for he saw something that caused him to rub his eyes and look again—a star that apparently had not been there when he had looked before. Yet was it a star? He gazed for some time, and finally made out a black body beneath the light. He called to the officer on the bridge, and the words caused the lieutenant to jump into the rigging, marine glass in hand. A moment later a messenger hurried below, and in five minutes Admiral Grau, who was only partly dressed, ran to the bridge, carrying a long telescope, and made his way up the shrouds to the military top.

One long glance was sufficient. He hurried down again, seized the bell-pull, and sounded two sharp strokes in the engine-room, which were followed by the stoppage of the propeller, and the *Huascar* lay motionless, save for a pendulum-like swaying from side to side. That which the forecastle lookout had announced as a «sail ahead» the lieutenant had discovered to be a steamship, and the admiral, aided by the powerful telescope, had made out a fleet in close sailing order, the vessel in the van an ironclad.

At the hour of this discovery the *Huascar* had the land about eight miles off her starboard beam. Thirty miles ahead lay Point Angamos, stretching twelve miles out to sea. It would therefore have been necessary to change the course several points to port in order to pass this promontory; and the watch officer was about to give an order to this effect when the lookout warned him of the light ahead.

While the *Huascar* was stationary Grau's observations told him that the vessels to the north were steering south. All the officers were summoned to the quarter-deck, but

there was little need for the order, as they, and also the crew, were gazing over the bulwarks ten minutes after the signal was given in the engine-room; for the stoppage of a steamship's machinery in the dead of night always causes an exodus from below.

Fifteen minutes after the first signal was given a ring for «full speed ahead» sounded, and as the ironclad gained steerageway she was put about on a course south by west; for Grau, mindful of his orders not to risk a conflict with one of the enemy's battle-ships, and also reminded of the almost crippled condition of the *Huascar's* machinery, had decided to run. It is a matter of record that at first he wished to continue northward and give battle, but his officers urged him to adopt the more conservative plan. Had he followed his impulse, a different story might have been recorded that day.

By this time the high sides of the Chilean ironclad showed plainly, but Grau trusted that the low build of the *Huascar* would enable her to escape unobserved. Fortune at once seemed to smile upon the Peruvian ship, for she had not been on the new course ten minutes when a light fog rolled in from the sea, and shut off all view of the fleet to the north. When the vessels were last seen they had veered a little to the west, and this showed that they had started in pursuit. Grau believed he could escape, and, as was subsequently learned, he was making two or three knots more than the enemy.

All this while the *Union* was eight or ten miles farther out at sea, and had not noticed the manœuvres. Grau did not signal her, for the course she was steering would carry her safe past the enemy, and even if pursued her superior speed would enable her to keep out of danger.

The weather became thicker, and the *Huascar's* head was put more to the westward, then gradually to the north. When she had steamed in this direction for an hour at an eight-knot speed, those who had been straining their eyes from the deck went below to make ready for breakfast; and even the admiral, convinced that he had avoided the enemy, retired to his cabin and began a more suitable toilet. But he had not been absent from the bridge ten minutes when a cry that resounded throughout the entire ship caused him to hurry back. To the northward the mist had parted, and there was revealed an ironclad, and gray, moisture-laden clouds rising on each side of her. She was ten miles distant, and was

headed straight for the *Huascar*; and the dense black smoke pouring from her funnels was evidence that she was being forced along at full speed.

A glance told Grau that further attempt at flight was useless. A loitering fleet was to the northeast, and an ironclad plunged forward from the northwest. Grau knew that it meant surrender or fight, and he prepared for battle.

The red, white, and red of Peru was flaunted from the peak, and in defiant reply a bit of bunting hoisted to a similar position on the approaching ship resolved any possible conjectures as to her identity, for it was made out to be the lone-star flag of Chile. Grau thought, from a peculiarity of construction, that the vessel was the *Almirante Cochrane*, and his surmise proved to be correct.

The drummers and buglers were ordered to sound calls, first for general quarters, then for action; and, stripped to the waist, the guns' crews crowded into the ill-ventilated turret, where they were to toil and sweat at the great pieces in an atmosphere that the sun's fierce rays, already causing the morning to be close and sticky, would make stifling. Ammunition-holds were thrown open, and the long curtains of green felt were slung from the deck-beams above to protect the magazine passages, in order that sparks might not fall among the explosives.¹ A dozen men hurried into the main military top to serve the Gatling gun and rifles there. Rubber cloths were stretched over the ward-room table, and fastened in such a manner that the blood of the wounded would flow smoothly and be caught in buckets that were placed at the four corners, for there one science would endeavor to save the lives that another science was trying to destroy. The surgeon and his assistants laid out scalpels, long gleaming knives, and saws. Huge piles of lint were placed on the floor.

The stewards hurriedly passed about coffee and bread, and the sailors in the turret ate their morning meal leaning against the already loaded pieces, and those in the top had pails of coffee carried up to them, which they drank while setting their sights. The hinged bulwarks of the little vessel were let down, and the smooth water rippled only four feet below the *Huascar's* deck. The forecabin and main hatches were battened, but the after-companionway was left open, for down this passage the wounded would be

¹ As to protection to the magazines, the *Huascar* had no ammunition-tubes.

taken. Between decks were stationed those sailors not needed in service of the guns, where they would be most handy to assist in the navigation of the ship, the service of ammunition, or to replace the killed. A score of non-combatants were also there.

At nine o'clock the *Cochrane* was within three thousand yards, and Grau, having given a last glance around, and having signaled the *Union* to keep out of the enemy's way, entered the conning-tower that was to prove his tomb. Not a shot had as yet been fired. These modern ships, carrying guns that could throw a shell from four to five miles, reserved their fire for closer quarters. Five minutes later Grau gave a command to the officer in the turret, and a shot from one of the *Huascar's* ten-inch guns whistled over the water. The commander of the *Cochrane* evidently wished for still closer range, and did not reply until three shots had left the turret of the little ship. Finally the answer came in the shape of a broadside, and a shell dented the *Huascar's* protective belt just above the water-line. A moment later the Gatling guns in the tops of both ships were brought into action, and a leaden hail began to patter, while great projectiles were hurled from the large deck cannon. The rapid-firing pieces of the Chileans were trained upon the *Huascar's* turret apertures, while the one in the military top of the latter vessel was aimed at the gun-ports of the enemy. Many a man dropped, dead or wounded, hit by one of these small shot. For fifteen minutes not much was accomplished by the great gun-fire; the heavy shot either fell short of the mark or were buried in the armor. By this time, when the ships were within fifteen hundred yards of each other, a shell from the *Cochrane* entered the *Huascar's* turret, exploded, and killed twelve men. But the places of the dead were quickly taken by men from below, the chamber was cleared of the corpses, the guns were loaded again, and the action was renewed. Then the *Huascar* secured an advantage. One of her ten-inch shells forced its way through a casemate on the starboard side of the *Cochrane*, exploded on the deck, dismantled a gun, and killed several men. For a few minutes the enemy was in such confusion that not a cannon was fired; and it became almost a panic on the *Cochrane* when the *Huascar* edged in closer, her sailors cheering as they again discharged the twin pieces.

At this stage of the combat victory perched for a moment on the red, white, and red; but

even as it did so the commander of the *Cochrane* saw relief which Grau had not perceived. In fact, a shot that plowed into the *Huascar's* side was the first warning the Peruvian admiral had of assistance coming to the Chileans; and looking to starboard through a peep-hole in the conning-tower, he saw the *Blanco Encalada* bearing down; while veering seaward, only a few cable-lengths' astern of the rapidly approaching ironclad, were the *Matias Cousiño* and the *Covadonga*, evidently starting off to give chase to the *Union*, by this time well in the offing, and fitted, because of her superior speed, to take care of herself. Grau therefore turned his attention to his own ship, which indeed was in sore straits.

Seeing aid at hand, the men on the *Cochrane* had redoubled their efforts, and when the *Blanco* had ranged along to port the horror of it began, and the engagement resolved itself into a marine carnage; for the *Huascar* lay between the two fires, the *Cochrane* to starboard, the *Blanco* to port, and both so near that the gunners in the turret of the little ship could see the faces of their adversaries as the latter sighted the pieces on the Chilean boats.

This turret rapidly became so crowded with the bodies of the dead that the steam training-gear of the iron roundhouse was clogged and useless. As the men struggled to remove the tumbled corpses of their comrades, blood became smeared over their chests, and it mingled with the sweat which dripped as they toiled in quarters that resembled a baking charnel-house, through which filtered steam and smoke, while a nauseous odor rose from the bodies and the heated guns. The sun beat down upon the wild scene through air so calm that after the white smoke had belched from the guns, it rose in pillars and clung to the mastheads.

From the first of the battle the encouraging voice of Grau had come to the men in the turret through the speaking-tube from the conning-tower;¹ but when the *Blanco* crowded into the thick of it, and great shot struck the *Huascar's* sides as regularly as blows of a battering-ram, the orders of the commander were no longer heard. The officer in charge of the turret called to his superior. There was no answer, and when Commander Elias Aguerre ran up the narrow little ladder that led to the tower, he stumbled over the dead body of his admiral. A shell had struck

¹ The tower was abaft the turret, not over it, as on many turret-ships.

the conning-tower, and had taken off Grau's head as neatly as if the decapitation had been by the guillotine. This shell also killed Lieutenant Ferré, the admiral's aide. There was only time to push the corpses aside, and the new commanding officer pulled back the tube-flap to give his directions; but as he did so the *Huascar* staggered, keeled over, then shook in every plate, while a concussion more terrific than any so far told that a shell had entered the turret and had burst there. When the fumes had cleared away so that a person could speak, a midshipman called out that one of the great guns had been dismounted, and twenty men killed. The survivors tumbled the bodies through the hatch that opened into the deck below, thus releasing the clogged machinery; and as the corpses rattled down other men rushed up, throwing off their clothing as they jumped into the pools of blood to seize hold of the gear and swing the remaining gun into position, that it might train upon one of the ships,—they could no longer make out which, nor did they care,—and it was discharged, hauled in, loaded, and discharged again.

Once more all was silent in the conning-tower. Lieutenant Palacios hastened there, but before he could enter he was compelled to push three bodies out of the way. He had barely given his first command when a bullet from the well-aimed rifle of a marine in an enemy's top lodged between his eyes. Then the fourth to command the *Huascar* that day, Lieutenant Pedro Garezon, took the place, and as he did so he called through an aperture, telling the quartermaster to put the helm to port; for he had determined to ram one of the adversaries, and sink with her if necessary. Over and over spun the wheel, but the *Huascar's* head still pointed between the Chileans.

«Port! Port, I say!» screamed the commander.

«She won't answer,» came back the sullen reply from the only one of four quartermasters alive; the bodies of the others were lying upon the grating at his feet.

«A shot has carried away the starboard steering-gear, sir,» reported an ensign; and he dropped dead as the words left his mouth.

The *Huascar* now lay drifting in a hell of shot and flame, but all the while the red, white, and red fluttered from the peak. One by one, in twos and in threes, the men in the turret dropped at their posts; and at last the remaining great gun was silent, its tackle literally choked with dead. The turret could not be turned for the same reason. Corpses

hung over the military top; corpses clogged the conning-tower.

With coats and waistcoats off, the surgeons had been laboring in the ward-room upon the wounded, who, shrieking in their agony, had been tumbled down the companionway like so much butchered beef; for there was no time to use stretchers or to carry a stricken comrade to a doctor's care. Steam and smoke filtered through the doorways, and the apartment became stifling. While they were sawing, amputating, and bandaging, a shell tore into the ward-room, burst, and fragments wounded the assistant surgeons, the chief of the medical staff having been killed earlier in the conflict. Those unfortunates who were stretched upon the table awaiting their turn under the knife, and those who lay upon the floor, suffered no more pain: they were killed as they lay groaning. This shell tore away ward-room and stern cabin, and hardly a trace was left of the bulkhead. After that what little surgery was done was performed in the coal-bunkers.

Huddled in a passageway near the engine-room were a score or more of non-combatants—stewards, pantrymen, and stokers. They were in a place that was lighted only as flashes came from the guns; it was filled with powder-smoke, and clouds of steam that drifted from below told that the *Huascar* had been struck in a vital spot—her machinery. Suddenly they heard a crash, followed by the rending of the deck, and the little ironclad swayed as if she had struck a reef. Some one passed the word that the maintopmast had been shot away. As it came down it brought living men to be dashed to death, also corpses that had been hanging over the sides of the military top.

There was a cry of «Fire!» and all hands rushed to stations—perhaps two men to a boat's crew, one to a pump gang.

«D—the fire!» shouted Lieutenant Garezon. «Repel boarders!»

They were metamorphosed by this order from fire-fighters into warriors again, and formed a line of bleeding men, their clothing in rags, and, ranged in company front, stokers elbowing marines, pantrymen leveling rifles in union with midshipmen, awaited the coming of a fleet of the enemy's boats which, crowded with marines, were forcing their way through the water toward the wounded, staggering *Huascar*, that lay like a log, motionless.

But fire raged between decks, and flames flared up the after-companionway; and when the boats had crowded around, like threshers

attacking a whale that had been struck to the death, the few survivors were compelled to yield to the force of numbers, and the Chileans swarmed the ironclad's deck. As they mounted it the red, white, and red, tattered and torn by bullets, still fluttered its rags at the peak.

The victors had barely got control of the flames when word was brought to the officer commanding the boarding party that the prize was sinking. He examined her sides, and as there was no great injury below the water-line, he summoned Chief Engineer MacMahon, and accused him of scuttling the ship. The latter laughed defiantly. The officer cocked a revolver, placed it at his head, and threatened to shoot if the man did not tell what he had done. Only then did he admit having opened the sea-valves, and the Chileans, rushing below, were only able to close them just as the blood-stained water lapped the slippery deck.

There is no authentic record of the number slain, but the accounts in Callao were that of two hundred men on the *Huascar* nearly one hundred were killed, and of the remainder only half escaped without injury.¹ The Peruvian dead were thrown into the sea as the *Blanco Encalada* took the battered, blood-stained *Huascar* in tow.

After the fight the *Huascar* was towed into the port of Mejillones, where the shot-holes were patched up and the steering-gear was repaired. Two days later she was conveyed to Valparaiso, and her entrance into that harbor, with the lone-star flag flying over the red, white, and red, was the first intimation that the Chilean populace had of the capture of the formidable little vessel. A week of feast and fête was at once begun, and wild scenes were enacted in the sea-coast town and in Santiago.

From the day of the capture of the *Huascar*, October 8, 1879, the Peruvians met with defeat after defeat; but nothing caused so much anger in Callao as the appearance, early in the following year, of the *Huascar*, flying the Chilean flag, as a part of the Chilean squadron that blockaded Peru's principal seaport.

On December 19 President Prado deserted. Without informing even his most intimate friends of his intention, he left the palace in Lima at two o'clock in the afternoon, went

¹ A number of officers had been enlisted from the English merchant marine, and a number of sailors taken on board at Arica. Grau was the only one who had a record of names, etc., and his books were destroyed by the fire in the cabin and the ward-room.

to Callao, was rowed out in the bay, and there boarded the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's steamship *Islay*, which sailed an hour later for Panama. That night there was a revolution in Lima, and it spread throughout the country. Thus the horrors of internecine war were added. After three days Don Nicolas de Pierola was declared dictator.

On Monday, January 17, 1881, Lima capitulated, and the war was virtually at an end. Then the map of South America was changed. Bolivia's bit of sea-coast became Chilean territory, and the victors annexed Peruvian soil as far north as Tacna, securing the richest land on the west coast, the provinces containing the nitrate-beds.

When the *Huascar* was being repaired in Valparaiso she was carefully examined by naval experts, and they learned from her the

lesson that armor which is not thick enough to withstand the heaviest projectiles of the enemy is worse than no armor at all, for it only causes the shells that penetrate it to explode and do greater damage. The same lesson was taught again at the battle of the Yalu, and attention was called to it in *THE CENTURY* by Captain McGiffin, who told the story of that engagement, and also by Captain Mahan in his comments on its significance.

To this day, at every general muster of a Peruvian army division, at every monthly inspection on the ships comprising the fleet, the name of Grau is the first to be heard in the roll-call. An officer steps forward, lifts his hat, points upward, and answers: «Absent, but accounted for. He is with the heroes.»



LOYALTY.

BY RUTH HUNTINGTON SESSIONS.

TWO friends I have, long loved, and trusted long.
 One, turning ever toward life's fairer side,
 And fearing lest it slip his grasp, would hide
 From his soul's inward eye all sight of wrong;
 Brings me the world's uncomprehending praise
 As friendship's highest tribute; sees in shame
 Of mine, or wilful blunder, naught to claim
 Deep-felt repentance: but in countless ways
 Finds pardon for me ever and again,
 Because—I am no worse than other men.

The second, looking up toward heaven's light,
 Yet works in stifling fog and close-drawn fray,
 'Mid want, doubt, selfish greed, where men must pray
 As, groping, they seek out lost gleams of right.
 Scanning my life with love's clear eyes, he sees
 My flimsy talents, old mistakes, low ends,
 And when I wear earth's laurels, but commends
 With stern «Thou canst do better things than these.»
 O keen soul-reader, judge me of these two;
 Which, think you, is the false friend, which the true?