

are asked to do to the British nation just what we have always insisted all nations ought to do us." The commissioners were released, and sailed for England in January; but the purpose of their mission had been practically thwarted.

But though danger of intervention was thus for the time averted, and the relations between the British Government and our own remained nominally friendly, so far as moral influence and bitterness of feeling could go the Republic had no more determined enemies in the cotton States than in the heart of England. The aristocratic classes rejoiced at anything that threatened to destroy democratic government or make its stability doubtful. They confidently expected to see our country fall into a state of anarchy like that experienced so often by the Spanish-American republics, and were willing to do everything they safely could do to bring it about. The foremost English journals had been predicting such a disaster ever since the beginning of the century, had

usual narrowness of provincials, blind to their own ultimate interests, were in the main more bitterly hostile than the mother country.

Louis Napoleon, then the despotic ruler of France, was unfriendly to the United States, and did his utmost to persuade the English Government to unite with him in a scheme of intervention that would probably have secured the division of the country. How far his plans went beyond that result, can only be conjectured; but while the war was still in progress (1864) he threw a French force into Mexico and established there an ephemeral empire with an Austrian Archduke at its head. That the possession of Mexico alone was not his object, is suggested by the fact that when the rebellion was subdued and the secession cause extinct, he withdrew his troops from Mexico and left the Archduke to the fate of other filibusters.

The Russian Government was friendly to the United States throughout the struggle. The Imperial manifesto for the abolition of serfdom in

pass through; but it was gradually rendered more and more effective. Large numbers of blockade-runners were captured or driven ashore and wrecked. The profit on a single cargo that passed either way in safety was very great, and special vessels for blockade-running were built in England. The Confederate Government enacted a law providing that half of every cargo thus brought into its ports must consist of arms or ammunition, otherwise vessel and all would be confiscated. This insured a constant supply; and though the Southern soldier was often barefoot and ragged, and sometimes hungry, he never lacked for the most improved weapons that English arsenals could produce, nor ever was defeated for want of powder. A very large part of the bullets that destroyed the lives and limbs of National troops were cast in England and brought over the sea in blockade-runners. Clothing and equipments, too, for the Confederate armies came from the same source. Often when a burial party went



INDIGNITIES SHOWN A MASSACHUSETTS EDITOR FOR PUBLISHING EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY WITH THE SOUTH.

announced it as in progress when a British force burned Washington in 1814, and now were surer of it than ever. Almost our only friends of the London press were the daily *News* and weekly *Spectator*. The commercial classes, in a country that had fought so many commercial wars, were of course delighted at the crippling of a commercial rival whom they had so long hated and feared, no matter what it might cost in the shedding of blood and the destruction of social order. Among the working classes, though they suffered heavily when the supply of cotton was diminished, we had many firm and devoted friends, who saw and felt, however imperfectly, that the cause of free labor was their own cause, no matter on which side of the Atlantic the battlefield might lie.

A few famous Englishmen—notably John Bright and Goldwin Smith—were true to the cause of liberty, and did much to instruct the laboring classes as to the real nature and significance of the conflict. Henry Ward Beecher, then at the height of his powers, went to England and addressed large audiences, enlightening them as to the real nature of American affairs, concerning which most of them were grossly ignorant, and produced an effect that was probably never surpassed by any orator. The Canadians, with the

Russia was issued on March 3, 1861, the day before President Lincoln was inaugurated, and this perhaps created a special bond of sympathy.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST UNION VICTORIES.

WHEN the war began, the greater part of the small navy of the United States was in distant waters and for some of the ships to receive the news and return, many months were required. Twelve vessels were at home—four in Northern and eight in Southern ports. The navy, like the army, lost many Southern officers by resignation or dismissal. About 300 who had been educated for its service went over to the Confederacy; but none of them took with them the vessels they had commanded. The Government bought all sorts of merchant craft, mounting guns on some and fitting up others as transports, and had gunboats built on ninety-day contracts. It was a most miscellaneous fleet, whose principal strength consisted in the weakness of its adversary. The first purpose was to complete the blockade of Southern ports. This never was made so perfect that no vessel could

out, after a battle, as they turned over one after another of the enemy's slain and saw the name of a Birmingham manufacturer stamped upon his buttons, it seemed that they must have been fighting a foreign foe. To pay for these things, the Confederates sent out cotton, tobacco, rice, and the naval stores produced by North Carolina forests. It was obvious from the first that any movement that would shut off a part of this trade, or render it more hazardous, would strike a blow at the insurrection. Furthermore, Confederate privateers were already out, and before the first expedition sailed 16 captured merchantmen had been taken into the ports of North Carolina.

Vessels could enter Pamlico or Albemarle Sound by any one of several inlets, and then make the port of Newbern, Washington, or Plymouth; and the first of several naval and military expeditions was fitted out for the purpose of closing Hatteras Inlet, 13 miles south of Cape Hatteras. Two forts had been erected on the point at the northern side of this inlet, and the project was to capture them.

The expedition was fitted out in Hampton Roads, and was commanded by Flag-officer Silas H. Stringham. It numbered 10 vessels, carrying 158 guns. Two were transport steamers, having