

grand assault must be the next thing, and at the same time famine threatened and the National holiday was at hand. After some negotiation General Pemberton unconditionally surrendered the city and his army of 31,600 men on the 4th of July, 1863, one day after Lee's defeat at Gettysburg.

Port Hudson, which Banks with 12,000 men and Farragut with his fleet had besieged for weeks, was surrendered with its garrison of 6000 men five days after the fall of Vicksburg. The Mississippi River was now open and the Confederacy was cut in two.

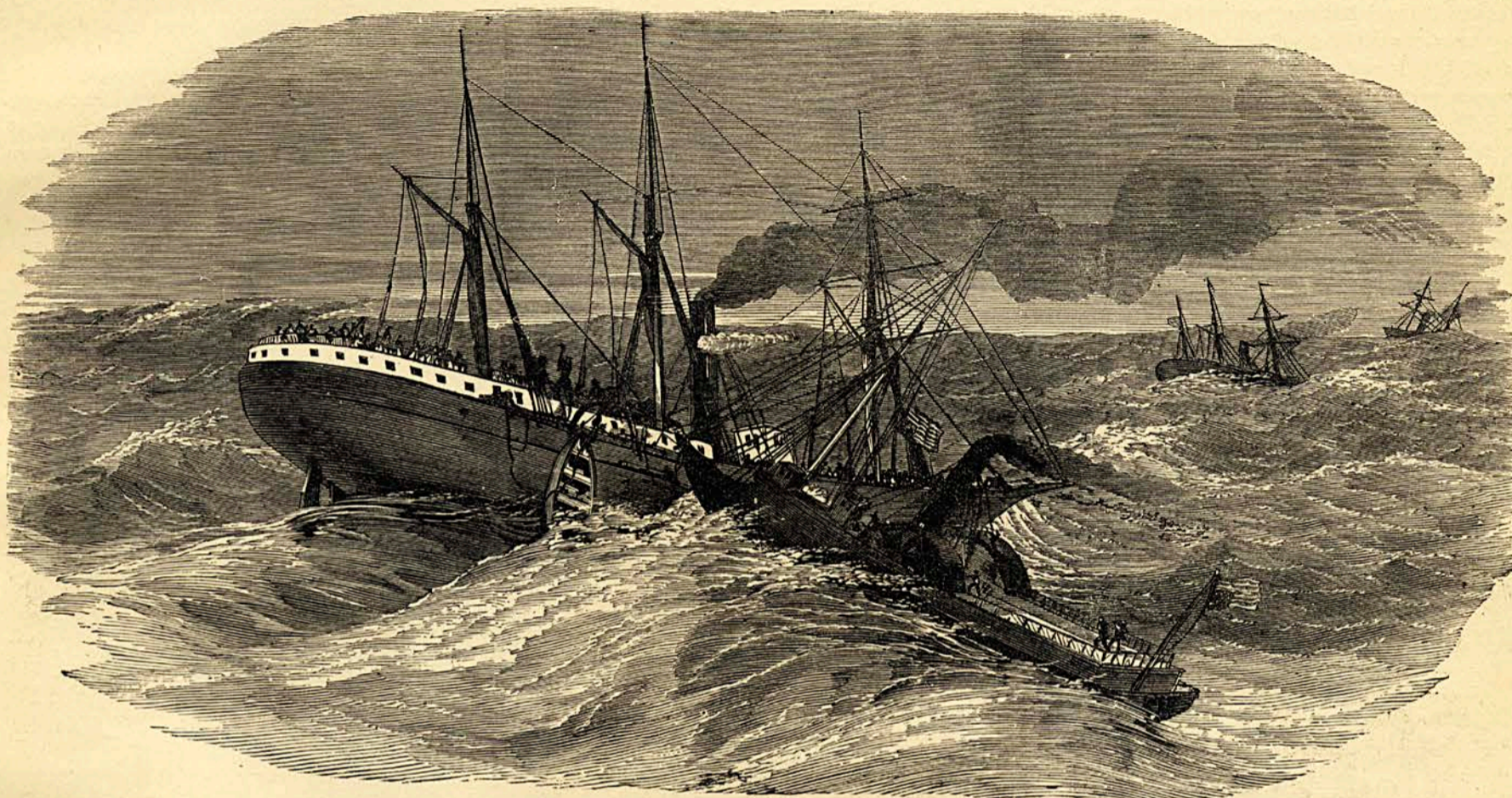
As soon as the surrender was effected, the famished Confederate army was liberally supplied with food, Grant's men taking it out of their own haversacks. All the prisoners at Vicksburg and Port Hudson were immediately paroled and fur-

West Indies, and thence with a pilot sailed for Charleston. After the main channel had been closed in consequence of the occupation of Morris Island by National troops, steamers of very light draft, built in England for this special service, slipped in by the shallower passes. A great many were captured—for the blockaders developed remarkable skill in detecting their movements—but the practice was never wholly broken up till the city was occupied by the National forces in February, 1865.

In January, 1863, two Confederate iron-clads steamed out of the harbor, on a hazy morning, and attacked the blockading fleet. Two vessels, by shots through their steam-drums, were disabled, and struck their colors; but the remainder of the fleet came to their assistance, and the iron-clads were driven back, leaving their prizes behind.

chains, and had become somewhat entangled therein with her raft, the batteries opened all around, and she and the other monitors that came to her assistance were the target for a terrible concentric fire of bursting shells and solid bolts. The return fire was directed principally upon Sumter, and was kept up steadily for half an hour, but seemed to have little effect; and after trying both the main and the south channel, the fleet retired. The monitor "Keokuk," which had made the nearest approach to the enemy, was struck nearly a hundred times. Shots passed through both of her turrets, and there were 19 holes in her hull. That evening she sank in an inlet. Most of the other vessels were injured, and some of the monitors were unable to revolve their turrets because of the bending of the plates.

Du Pont's defeat was offset two months later,



COLLISION BETWEEN THE STEAM-TRANSPORTS "STAR OF THE SOUTH" AND THE "PEERLESS," IN THE GREAT STORM OF NOVEMBER 2, 1861.

nished with transportation and supplies, under the supposition that they would go to their homes and remain there till properly exchanged.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SIEGE OF CHARLESTON.

AS Charleston was the cradle of secession, there was a special desire on the part of the Northern people that it should undergo the heaviest penalties of war. They wanted poetic vengeance to fall upon the very men that had taught disunion, fired upon Sumter, and kindled the flames of civil strife. And there were not a few at the South who shared this sentiment, believing that they had been dragged into ruin by the politicians of South Carolina. But there was a better than sentimental reason for directing vigorous operations against Charleston. Its port was exceedingly useful to the Confederates for shipping their cotton to Europe and receiving in return the army clothing, rifles, and ammunition that were produced for them by English looms and arsenals. Early in the war the Government attempted to close this port with obstructions. Several old whale-ships were loaded with stone, towed into the channel, and sunk. But the strong currents at Charleston soon swept them away or buried them in the sand, and a dozen war-vessels had to be sent there to maintain the blockade. This was exceedingly difficult. The main channel ran for a long distance near the shore of Morris Island, and was protected by batteries. The westward-bound blockade-runners commonly went first to the British port of Nassau, in the

This affair increased the desire to capture the port. Accordingly a powerful fleet was fitted out and placed under the command of Rear-Admiral S. F. Du Pont. It consisted of seven monitors, an iron-clad frigate, an iron-clad ram, and several wooden gunboats. On the 7th of April, 1863, favored by smooth water, Du Pont steamed in to attack the forts. But most extraordinary precautions had been taken to defend the city. The special desire of the Northern people was to capture it was offset by an equally romantic determination on the part of the secessionists not to part with the cradle in which their pet theory had been rocked for thirty years. Besides the batteries that had been erected for the reduction of Fort Sumter, they had established others, and they occupied that fort itself. All these works had been strengthened, and new guns mounted, including some specially powerful ones of English manufacture. All the channels were obstructed with piles and chains, with innumerable torpedoes, some of which were to be fired by electric wires from the forts, while others were arranged to explode whenever a vessel should run against them. The main channel, between Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumter, was crossed by a heavy cable supported on empty barrels, with which was connected a network of smaller chains. In the south channel there was a tempting opening in the row of piles; but beneath this were some tons of powder waiting for the electric spark.

The monitor "Weehawken" led the way, pushing a raft before her to explode the torpedoes. Not a man was to be seen on any of the decks, and the forts were ominously silent. But when the "Weehawken" had reached the network of

when the Confederate iron-clad "Atlanta" started out from Savannah on her first cruise. Du Pont sent two monitors to watch her. On the 17th of June, early in the morning, she dropped down the channel, followed by two steamers loaded with citizens, including many ladies, who anticipated a great deal of pleasure in seeing their powerful iron-clad sink the monitors. These came up to meet her, the "Weehawken," Captain Rodgers, taking the lead. Rodgers fired just five shots, from his enormous 11 inch and 15 inch guns. One struck the shutter of a porthole and broke it, another knocked off the "Atlanta's" pilot-house, another struck the edge of the deck and opened the seams between the plates, and another penetrated the iron armor, splintered the heavy wooden backing, and disabled 40 men. Thereupon the "Atlanta" hung out a white flag and surrendered, while the pleasure-seekers hastened back to Savannah.

Charleston, between its two rivers, with its well-fortified harbor, bordered by miles of swampy land, was exceedingly difficult for an enemy to reach. General Quincy A. Gillmore, being sent with a large force to take it, chose the approach by way of Folly and Morris islands, where the monitors could assist him. Hidden by a fringe of trees, he first erected powerful batteries on Folly Island. On the northernmost point of Morris Island (Cummings Point) was the Confederate battery Gregg. South of this was Fort Wagner, and still farther south were other works. On the morning of July 10th, Gillmore suddenly cut down the trees in his front and opened fire upon the most southerly works on Morris Island, while the fleet commanded by Admiral Dahlgren,