Chas
10.00

Aye, "what had Stanton, as Secretary of War, to do with the purchase of vessels of any kind?" — and especially let us ask what he had to do with the purchase of the Illinois? — what was the price paid for her? — what was her valuation by naval men? — and what became of the purchase-money? Some particulars in relation to that, and other transactions ~~made by the~~ of Stanton himself would be acceptable, if we could get them.

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Manuscript of Gideon Welles

They have been ready to call on the Navy Department, which publishes annually its list of Naval vessels and expenditures, for particulars, ~~and~~ similar information. Mr Washburn, the trainer and groomsman of the radical candidate for President has insinuations and out-givings in relation to the purchase of naval vessels. The historian of the Tribune in his "American Conflict" is ~~not~~ scarcely less unjust to the Navy, and the Navy Department.

The operations ~~against~~ which resulted in the capture of Fort Hatteras, Port Royal, Forts Jackson and St Philip, and New Orleans, ~~were~~ each and all originated in, and were planned by the Navy Department. Get any one

who reads the "American Conflict" and relies on it as authority will not only be wholly ignorant of the facts, but will be led to conclude that Gen Butler, or some ~~one~~ Radical who performed a subordinate military part is entitled to the credit of these achievements. Not only the important places mentioned, but in every bombardment which took place ~~from~~ beginning with Forts Henry and Donaldson on the Cumberland and Pemmee, including Shiloh or Pittsburg Landing, Island No 10, Memphis, Vicksburg ~~and~~ Port Hudson on the Mississippi, Mobile, Fort Fisher and Wilmington the Navy bore a conspicuous part although almost entirely

ignored by such narrow partisans as Rathbun and ~~the~~ Welly. Some of these last unmanly demonstrations, particularly those of Fort Fisher and Mobile were based in their origin, & were notoriously pressed and urged upon the War Department for more than two years, because ~~a two~~ a military co-operating force was necessary. Gen Grant, it seems from Badeau's late publication, ~~had~~ coincided with the Navy Department in regard to the capture of Mobile.

Without a co-operating land force, the Navy could not with safety ~~a place~~ retain and possession of a place, and the War Department was, it is well known reluctant

in almost every instance to grant facilities, yet when the work was executed, and ~~success~~ crowned the achievement, such partisans as the Dilemma always gave the credit to others ~~and~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ indeed of the Navy and the Navy Department when it belonged.

So of the expedition. From the beginning of the war to its close, there was a class of party men like Hale of New Hampshire and Wathen of Illinois who were ~~also~~ incessantly attacking and abusing the Secretary of the Navy and officers in the service. When the Extra Session of 1861 was convened by Mr Lincoln, and before he ~~had been~~ could send in his message to Congress Senator P Hale presented a resolution ~~to pass~~ enquiring by what authority the

Secretary of the Navy was building and purchasing vessels, while others ~~of his as~~ who were Hale's associates were denouncing the Secretary as too slow in not organizing without ships, or guns, or men a naval force to blockade a coast of three thousand five hundred miles in extent. The Secretary, while he executed his work promptly and efficiently, was at any moment was neglectful of the public interest. The history of other nations may be searched in vain for the creation & maintenance of such a navy, at so small an expense, as that of the United States from 1861 to 1865. ~~on the downfall of the rebellion.~~ Vigilance, economy and efficiency characterized the Navy Department throughout that whole period,

and it is honorable to our ~~country~~ ~~and~~ countrymen, that the Secretary was throughout sustained, amidst the obloquy and abuse of petty politicians in Congress, and had the confidence of the country. The Navy Register containing annually a list of the ~~naval~~ vessels belonging to the Navy. They seem not one third the number that were ~~owned and~~ employed by the Navy Department. Many of them were costly & magnificent Ocean steamers and Iron Clads, armed with heavy and expensive ordnance. Manned by splendid crews, and all engaged on active blockade and cruising duty ~~after the~~ and in between in every assault and bombardment that was made. We have not all the details of this great work of the Navy and the manner which it was effected,

~~of the Navy~~ and therefore
~~and we~~ are not sorry ~~that~~ it has been called for, though the motives which led to that call may not have been commendable.

But we have, in the quiet calm and ~~unanimity~~ deliberate Report of the Secretary of the Navy in December 1865 the following statement:

(See Report)

Here is an exhibit of which our countrymen may well be proud; but no word of approbation or of commendation ~~or of~~ was ever bestowed by politicians like the Tribune on the Navy, or ~~of~~ men who so economically & efficiently administer that Department of the government. The duds of such men as Farragut, Porter, Dupont and others could not be wholly passed over, but the Greeleys & Raymonds

pass this with brief & extortive approval. An average expenditure of twenty two millions a year, during a period of active war & in enforcing the most effective blockade the world has ever known, seems, or an aggregate of three hundred and fourteen millions one hundred & seventy ~~millions~~ thousand dollars in over four years, when the government expended ~~over~~ over three thousand millions of dollars, twenty five hundred ~~&~~ millions of which is a public debt is certainly an evidence of correct and economical administration which is not found elsewhere in the government. Mr Washburn has called for particulars from the Navy Dept.

Let the Tribune unite with us for information in regard to the ninety five millions expended, and the three thousand six hundred & ninety three vouchers employed by the War Department, and all other vouchers and all other expenses for vouchers by that Department.