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Defiance at Sea

Nelson's Patent Boarding Device

I have read many books about history and naval battles. Nothing can turn me away from such book until it is finished. This book embraces the navy battles where one party has won in spite of the overwhelming power of the enemy. But from all the stories the one about the Nelson's triumph over the French was for me the most interesting.

In Nelson's time Napoleon has conquered almost entire Europe. Only Russia and Great Britain have been still standing on his way to total domination. Then Russians signed the peace treaty and the only enemy left was Great Britain. Napoleon knew that England had strong army so he tried to break it in another way. He ordered his battleships to break English supply routs, by attacking the merchant ships and blocking English ports. If he had succeeded, England would have also been conquered by French. But brave English sailors thwarted his plans. England was so saved from the invasion because of Nelson's and his companions' victory.

The decisive battle took place in waters near Cape St. Vincent on 14th February 1797. French fleet was strengthened with the Spaniards, so Englishmen were actually in inferior position. There were 27 French and Spanish warships against 10 English. In spite the English being outnumbered Admiral Sir John Jervis led them into the battle. They rammed into the French-Spanish fleet and made total mess in enemy's formation. In this fight Nelson, his ship *Captain* and its crew showed great amount of courage and initiative. They boarded and captured two ships of the line and made tremendous damage to many other ships although *Captain* was heavy damaged; according to Nelson "there was not a sail, shroud or rope standing!"

After this glorious victory the blockade of English ports was broken; England was saved. Being completely defeated at sea, Napoleon decided to march against Russia.

Horatio Nelson

Today name Nelson is in navy still a synonym for courage, initiative and endurance. In spite reaching the noble title and the high rank in the society in the times after his victory over French it had not been always that way. He actually came from a poor working family. When he left home at the age of thirteen he had nothing but 20 pounds. But with his hard work and inherited faculty he soon promoted to commodore and later to captain. He started as an apprentice but ended as an Admiral.

In the invasion on Corsica one of the shell drops hurt his eye that much, that he was from that time one eye blind. Instead quarrels with enemy brought him many wounds. Even in his "last fight" he was badly wounded, but in spite the wounds he still kept commanding and controlling the rudder; at the end he died because of that. His attitude toward himself was horrible; it did not matter

if it rained dogs and cats, if he was wounded, only the sails had had to be full of wind and everything was perfect. Because of his dedication to the work and his humbleness Nelson was also very popular by his sailors and soldiers; he actually shared with them everything. So they got the feeling as if they were in a big family.

Nelson was a great person and will always stay reminded. He was a drudging worker on one hand but also a noble gentleman on the other.

Words:

anticipate

to expect

pričakovati

appall

to horrify or shock

zgroziti

arouse

to cause or give rise to sth

vzbuditi

bulk

the greater part

večji del

canvas

a coarse cloth made of hemp or flax

platno

dart

a pointed arrow-like weapon for throwing or shooting

sulica

deaf

unable to hear

gluh

defiance

open disobedience

kljubovanje

embellish

to increase the interest of a story by adding untrue details

olepšati

enraged

to make very angry

razbesneti (koga)

field

an area of battle

bojišče

fierce

very angry and likely to attack

napadalen

fiery

like fire

plameneč

fortitude

courage and endurance

trdnost

foster

to look after for a period of time

rediti, vzgajati

foundry

a place where metal or glass is formed by melting and pouring into moulds

livarna

fringe

the outer area

obrobje

gaunt

thin or thinfaced

mršav

gesture

a movement of the head

kretnja

intense

very great

silen

litter

an untidy mess of paper, rubbish

smeti

malady

an illness or disease

bolezen

monastic

of, or like, monks or monasteries

samostanski

omission

something that has been left out

izpustitev

pincers

a tool for gripping things tightly

klešče

pundit

a person who knows a lot about a particular subject

strokovnjak

raid

a sudden and unexpected attack

nenaden napad

realm

an area of activity

področje

repulse

to repel

odbiti

rigour

strictness, harshness

strogost

seagull

a gull

galeb

spar

a strong, thick pole of wood or metal, esp used on ships as a mast

jadrnik

spool

the amount of thread held by such a holder

motek

stake

a strong stick or post

kol

supremacy

the state of being the greatest or most powerful

nadvlada

tangled

in a tangle

zameštran

tenuous

so weak and slight that it hardly exist

tanek

bind

to tie up

povezati, zavezati

elude

to escape or avoid by quickness or cleverness

izmakniti se

flex

to bend esp in order to test

upogniti

ignite

to catch fire

vneti se

ram

to run into

zaleteti se

scuttle

to make a hole in the ship in order to sink it

navrtati ladjo

strive

to try very hard or struggle

prizadevati se

subdue

to conquer, overcome or bring under control

podrediti

tract

a piece of land

kos zemljišča

twine

a strong kind of string made of twisted threads

pletena vrv

unprecedented

never known to have happened before

brez primere

vanguard

the part of an army going in front of the main body

predstraža

wit

humour

duhovitost

