



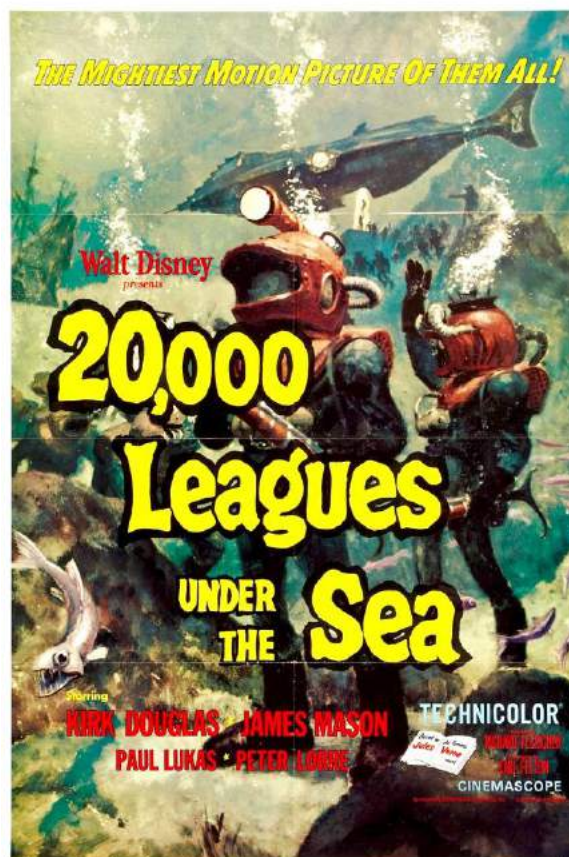
Jules Verne and the Heroes of Birkenhead.

Part 31.

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea – Part One.

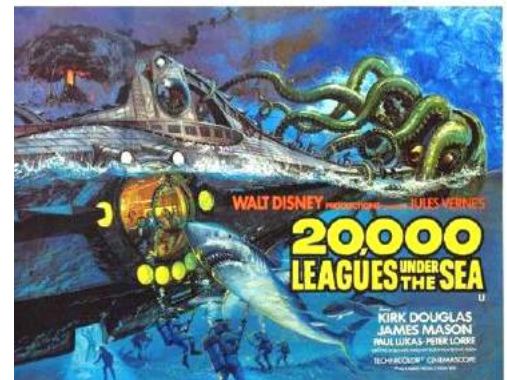
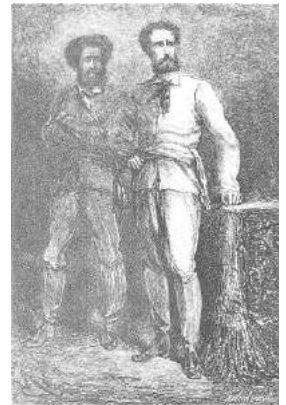
By John Lamb

(Former Head of Geography, The Liverpool Blue Coat School, England).



UBI FIDES IBI LUX ET ROBUR

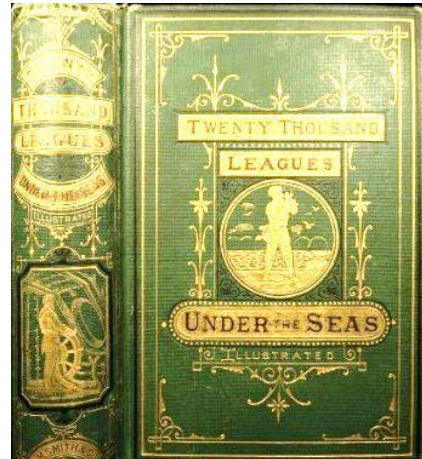




TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA.

Jules Verne's *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* is one of the most famous novels in modern Science Fiction. The novel was originally serialized from March 1869 to June 1870 in Pierre-Jules Hetzel's fortnightly periodical, the *Magasin d'éducation et de récréation* and the first bound edition containing over one hundred illustrations was published in November 1871.

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea First Edition.



The book has been adapted for film and television many times; however, the most celebrated adaptation was the 1954 Walt Disney film starring James Mason as the enigmatic Captain Nemo. At the time the film was the most expensive movie production ever made.

James Mason and Paul Lukas.

The Disney legacy continues into the present day, and in 2022 Disney + completed a \$100 million ten-part mini-series 'origin story' of Captain Nemo and the *Nautilus* starring Shazad Latif as Captain Nemo.

Once again, Jules Verne has displayed impeccable timing, as this is the second occasion in 150 years when two 'origin stories' of Captain Nemo have been released at the same time.

Shazad Latif

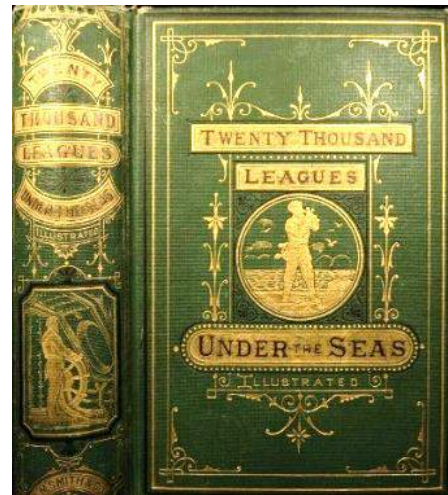


Raphael Semmes's Civil War experiences are recorded in his book *Memoirs of Service Afloat During the War Between the States* published in March 1869, the same month that Jules Verne's published his *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. There are hundreds of similarities between the two books and the only logical conclusion is that these two authors worked closely together.

As we shall see, Semmes will be the greatest individual inspiration for Captain Nemo and the Birkenhead built CSS *Alabama* will be the inspiration for the Birkenhead built *Nautilus* in Jules Verne's classic science fiction novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869).



Memoirs of Service Afloat During The War Between the States (March 1869)



Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea (March 1869)

After the sinking of the CSS *Alabama* on 19th June 1864, Raphael Semmes was rescued from the waters of the English Channel by John Lancaster's yacht the *Deerhound* of the Royal Mersey Yacht Club of Tranmere, Birkenhead.

Semmes dined the next night at the London flat of John Laird, M.P. the builder of the CSS *Alabama* and in fiction, Captain Nemo's *Nautilus*, Laird was also a member of the Royal Mersey Yacht Club of Tranmere, Birkenhead. Semmes then recuperated at the home of the Confederate sympathiser, the Reverend Francis Tremlett at his vicarage at Belsize Park, London. Tremlett was also a member of the Royal Mersey Yacht Club of Tranmere, Birkenhead.

Tremlett obtained a forged passport for Semmes in the name of Raymond Smith, and along with several others he took Semmes on a European vacation to Belgium, France and the Swiss Alps.

Stephen Fox in his biography of Raphael Semmes *Wolf of the Deep* (2007) takes up the story.

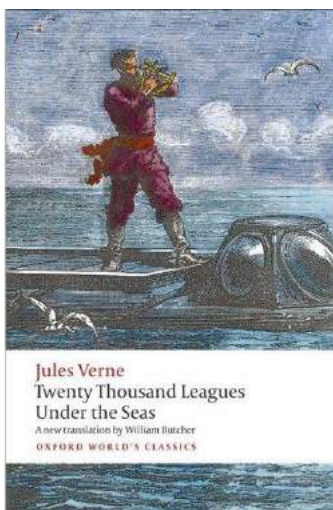
On the fifth of September they took a train from Geneva to Paris, "where we remained for a week and did the city."

On September 15th the rest of the party left for England. Semmes remained in Paris for a few days longer, perhaps preferring the more discrete safety of travelling alone after the

conspicuous company of his English friends. While he stayed on, Semmes received a letter from his faithful clerk, Breedlove Smith, in Liverpool asking for instructions. “My movements will be so uncertain for some weeks yet,” Semmes wrote him, “that I think that you had better not wait longer for me but make the best of your way home by the first opportunity that offers.”

As we shall see the overwhelming literary evidence suggests that Raphael Semmes had several sanctioned meetings in Paris with Jules Verne and handed over the *Alabama*’s journals to the author, they would become the inspiration for one of the most famous novels of all time.

Raphael Semmes, as an ‘unreconstructed’ Confederate would be ‘judged’ by Jules Verne in both *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) and its sequel ‘*The Mysterious Island*’ (1874).

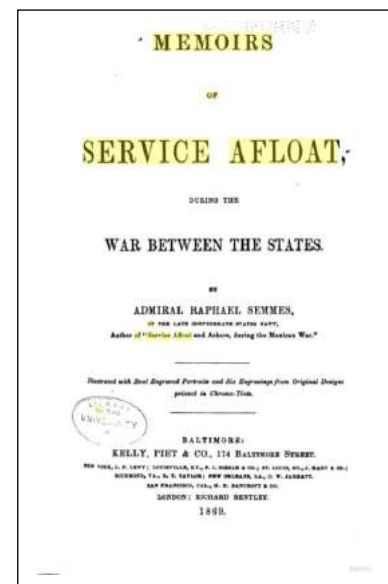


The translation of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* used here is the William Butcher 1998 Oxford World Classics Edition and accepted by Verne scholars as the most faithful to Jules Verne’s original manuscripts.

William Butcher is a leading authority on the author Jules Verne.

The comparable Memoirs of Raphael Semmes are online and can be found here.

[Raphael Semmes, Memoirs of Service Afloat During the War Between the States, Chapter 54: , page 763 \(ldf.fi\)](#)



Who is the best and most gifted writer? That is up to the reader to judge – but far, far more important is the idea that by allowing himself to be judged in the style of Ecclesiastes, Raphael Semmes may have well been asking for Christian forgiveness for his sins in the American Civil War.

If this is true, then the question we must ask ourselves is this; are we ready to forgive Raphael Semmes for the sins he committed 150 years ago?

It will be up to other historians, far more qualified than myself, to decide whether Raphael Semmes and perhaps other leading Confederates did indeed repent and try to atone for their part in the American Civil War. Until then all I can do is present the evidence in full, as a 'neutral historian'.

And to think all this happened because one day I decided to look at some steel plates on a fictional submarine.

John Lamb, Liverpool, August 2022



UBI FIDES IBI LUX ET ROBUR

Where there is faith there is light and strength

There is hardly a man now living and moving within the realm of Christendom who has better prospect of hereafter passing into a hero and becoming the principal character of an epic poem or drama than Captain Semmes of the Alabama.

Cape Town Advertiser August 1863.

An Introduction to the Memoirs of Raphael Semmes as written by Stephen Fox in his 2007 Biography *Wolf of the Deep*.

After retrieving his *Alabama* journal from Frank Tremlett, the admiral spent most of 1868 immersed in book writing. It was the logical, almost inevitable next step for him. His memoir of the Mexican War had sold well and drawn praise from all quarters, north and south. During his Civil War service, the journals he kept on the *Sumter* and the *Alabama* often read as though they were intended for early publication, as the captain seems to be explaining himself with a larger audience in mind. The quick two-volume book drawn from his journals and published in London after Cherbourg did not satisfy him. He wanted to produce his own apologia – to make money, and to leave a conspicuous permanent record of the rage he still felt over the war's outcome.

Memoirs of Service Afloat, During the War Between the States was published late in 1868 by Kelly, Piet and Company of Baltimore. The title notwithstanding, Semmes conceived it as more than a war memoir, as a “book of the sea, and of adventure, independently of the ship or the writer.” So he digresses freely through 833 pages, departing from his narrative for three pages on ocean currents, five on cloud rings, five more on gyratory storms, and eleven on a sailor's constant focus, the fickle ocean winds. No matter where he is cruising, and what else is taking place, he always keeps all his senses open to “the wonders and beauties of nature.” On these levels the book has a timeless, classic quality, conveying the tang, terror, mystery, and exultation of life at sea. Semmes is fascinated by the structural marvels of the coral organism, “that patient little stone-mason of the deep,” and the shifting kaleidoscope of the ocean sky, especially at sunset. When the *Alabama* arrives at port, the captain goes ashore and reports on the strange land and people. Life on the cruiser herself is inevitably inward and even claustrophobic, but these larger aspects offer space and relief to the memoir, often welcome, and connections to wider worlds.

Semmes begins the book with eight chapters on the historical background of the war. The founding constitutional principles of the United States, he argues, had been perverted, mainly by New England Puritans. In their “gloomy asceticism of character, and an intolerance of other men's opinions quite remarkable,” they seized control of the national government and imposed crushing taxes and tariffs on the South. The two sections diverged into incompatible cultures, Puritan and Cavalier, creating a replay of the English Civil War. “Whilst the civilization of the North was coarse, and practical, that of the South was more intellectual, and refined.” The North had no sincere objections to slavery, but merely used the issue as a cynical excuse for expanding its power. (This overview of events has not stood up well to later historical understanding)...

...Semmes does not reach the *Sumter* until page 93 and the *Alabama* until page 400, nearly halfway through the book. Once at sea, the narrative consists essentially of excerpts from the journals with the author's later elaborations and digressions. Semmes takes recurring liberties with the purported excerpts, changing the wording, adding sentences, and altering details. Many of these changes are simply to improve the story – “a woman” becomes “a beautiful woman” – and the plain language of the journal is elevated into literary flourishes. The size of the Union force supposedly at Galveston in January 1863 is raised from fifty ships and 20,000 men to one hundred ships and 30,000 men – making the captain's intended raid that much more daring.

As to onboard discipline, “we never had any trouble about keeping the most desperate and turbulent characters in subjection”.

Semmes therefore does not mention the cigar mutiny of November 1863 or the crew’s bristling restlessness during the latter part of the cruise. He insists that boarding parties were never allowed to bring alcohol or personal booty back to the *Alabama* “if such license had been permitted, disorder and demoralization would have been the consequence” – but many external sources contradict this (Isolated in his cabin and by his own willful inattention, he may never have known the true extent of the looting). Semmes does not include his boarding strategy for the Battle with the *Kearsarge*, perhaps because it failed, or the week he spent in Paris at the end of his flight to the continent, perhaps because that might have seemed too self-indulgent while the Confederacy was bleeding and burning.

In his most serious rewriting of the journal, Semmes overturns his actual understanding, early in the war, of slavery as the cause of the conflict. In August 1861, while coaling the *Sumter* at a port in Venezuela, he fell into conversation with an English Sea Captain. According to *Memoirs*, he explained that slavery had little to do with the war. “The canting, hypocritical Yankee cares as little for our slaves as he does for our draught animals,” he recalls saying. Slavery was only a pretext for robbing the south and extending the Yankee empire. “We are, in fact, fighting for independence.” Semmes had recorded none of these alleged statements in the journal entry for that date. He could not have remembered them, word for word, seven years later; they were just his retrospective wisdom masked as contemporary insight. Instead in journal entries later in the fall of 1861, he had written “that we were fighting the first battle in favor of slavery” and “the true issue of the war” was “an abolition crusade against our slave property.” But Semmes tellingly does not allow these candid admissions into his book. On this most consequential point, he denies and twists his own clear historical record.

Yet *Memoirs of Service Afloat* is one of the finest, fullest works by a major participant in the war. Of the principal commanders, North and South, perhaps only Farragut, Sherman, Mosby, and Rosecrans could match Semmes’s intellectual range and interests. In *Memoirs* he presents quotations in Latin, French, and Spanish, all without translation, assuming that any intelligent reader would understand them. He sprinkles the narrative with brief snatches from the Bible, Shakespeare, Francis Bacon, Walter Scott, Horace Greeley, Tocqueville, the English poet James Montgomery, the Confederate Poet Father Abram Ryan – and his favourite poet, Lord Byron, with eleven quotations. Considered simply as a piece of writing, the book is far deeper, wider, and better written than – for example – the much more famous memoir by Grant (but Grant’s side won the war, and history gets passed down by the winners). Like most autobiographies, it is a testament, presenting the best aspects of the author as he wished to be remembered. It sold fairly well, reaching ten thousand copies after less than a year, and kept selling.

In the politics of the late 1860’s it was an act of war. Written during the most radical phase of Reconstruction, when the white South felt besieged by scalawags, carpetbaggers, and blacks asserting their rights as free men and women, the book screamed one long cry of wounded but unvanquished pride. It surely did nothing to help reconcile the former enemies. “The shameless record of a most inglorious and deplorable career,” declared *Putnam’s Magazine* of New York. “We have no patience with Admiral-Captain Semmes and his gasconading book ... There never was a meaner, more ungallant enterprise than that of the ship-scuttler of the British pirate Alabama.” The war continued...

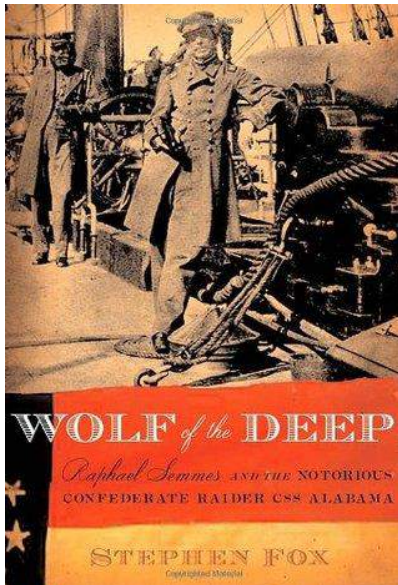
...Semmes, by defending slavery in a nation committed to individual rights and democracy, put himself on the wrong side of history. Neither he nor any true Confederate, then or now, can escape that judgement. When seen against the grand scope of Western history and its finest achievements, the endless struggle for freedom and self-determination, the cruise of the *Alabama* deserved to end in defeat.

Stephen Fox.

Reproduced from

Wolf of the Deep.

***Raphael Semmes and the Notorious Confederate Raider the CSS Alabama.* (2007).**



STEPHEN FOX

WOLF of the DEEP

Stephen Fox is an independent historian who received a Ph.D. in history from Brown University. He is the author of six previous books, including *Transatlantic*, a history of the great Atlantic steamships. He is based in Boston, Massachusetts.

Outline of the Novel.

During the year 1866, ships of various nationalities sight a mysterious sea monster. Great concern is raised when several vessels are attacked. Matters come to a head when the passenger ship *Scotia* the pride of the Cunard fleet, limps into Liverpool with a large gash in her side.

It is later suggested, that the attacks have been carried out by a giant sea creature such as a Moby Dick, the dreaded kraken or most likely a gigantic narwhal.

The *New York Herald* challenges Pierre Arronax (played by Jules Verne as narrator) to formulate an opinion of some sort. The United States Government, concerned about rising insurance premiums, commissions the warship *Abraham Lincoln* to find and destroy the monster.

Pierre Arronax receives a last-minute invitation to join the expedition; he accepts. Canadian whaler and master harpooner Ned Land and Aronnax's faithful manservant Conseil also join him .

The expedition leaves Brooklyn aboard the United States Navy frigate *Abraham Lincoln*, then travels south around Cape Horn into the Pacific Ocean.

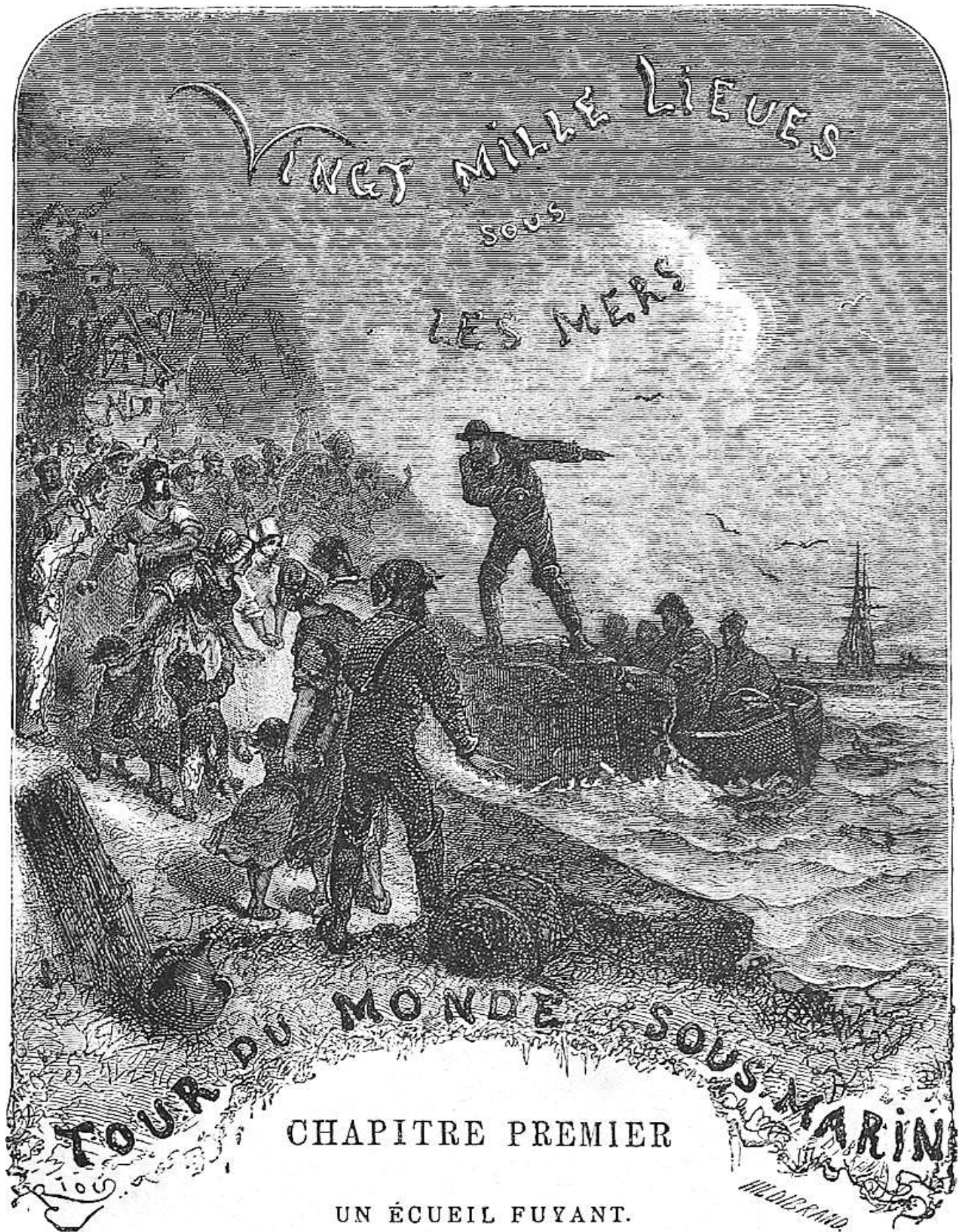
After a five-month search ending off Japan, the frigate locates and attacks the monster, which damages the ship's rudder.

Aronnax and Land are thrown into the sea, and Conseil jumps into the water after them. They survive by climbing onto the "monster", which, they are startled to find, is a futuristic submarine.

They wait on the deck of the vessel until morning, when they are captured, hauled inside, and introduced to the submarine's mysterious constructor and commander, Captain Nemo.

Nemo tell his captives that they must never betray the secret of his existence and so must never leave the *Nautilus*. In return he will take them on an underwater tour of the world's oceans - a distance of 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea.

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne.



CHAPTER I

A SHIFTING REEF

THE year 1866 was marked by a strange event, an unexplained and inexplicable occurrence that doubtless no one has yet forgotten. Without mentioning the rumours which agitated the denizens of the ports and whipped up the public's imagination on every continent, seafaring men felt particularly disturbed.

The merchants, shipowners, sea captains, skippers, and master mariners of Europe and America, the naval officers of every country, and eventually the various national governments on both continents – all became extremely worried about this matter.

For some time already, sea-going ships had been encountering an 'enormous thing': a long, spindle-shaped object, which sometimes appeared phosphorescent and was infinitely larger and quicker than a whale...

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p5

'Alabama was the first steamship in the history of the world—the defective little Sumter excepted—that was let loose against the commerce of a great commercial people. The destruction which she caused was enormous.



The Birkenhead built CSS Alabama

'She not only alarmed the enemy, but she alarmed all the other nations of the earth which had commerce afloat, as they could not be sure that a similar scourge, at some future time, might not be let loose against themselves.'

Raphael Semmes. *Memoirs of Service Afloat* (1869). Preface.

The facts concerning this apparition, as noted in the various logbooks, agreed quite closely as to the structure of the said object or creature, **its extraordinary speed of movement**, its surprising ability to get from place to place, and the peculiar vitality with which it seemed endowed.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869)

..... She did, indeed, then seem “To walk the waters like a thing of life,” **and there were few sailing ships that could run away from her**.....

Raphael Semmes –*Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869)

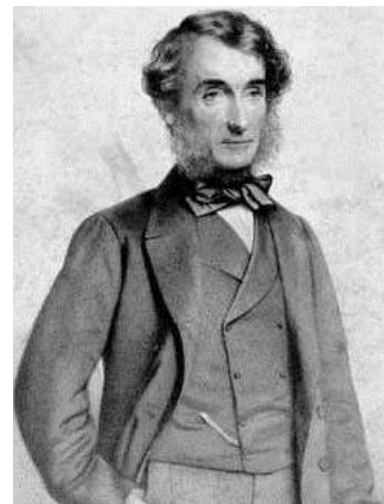
The monster came into fashion in all the big cities: it was sung about in the cafes;

When the Alabama's keel was laid
Roll Alabama roll
She was laid in the yard of Jonathan Laird
Oh roll Alabama roll

She was laid in the yard of Johnathan Laird
Roll Alabama roll
She was laid in the town of Birkenhead
Oh roll Alabama roll

Traditional Sea Shanty

Birkenhead's John Laird (1805-74)



Daar kom die Alibama,

Die Alibama, die kom oor die see,

Afrikaan Folk Song, South Africa 1863.



Da ar kom die Alibama,

Dakar om die Alibama!

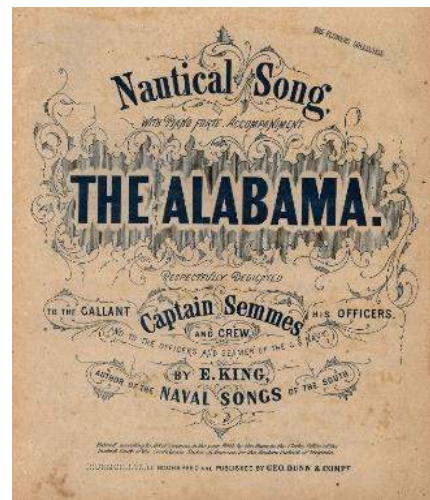




...Jeered at in the newspapers...

The vilification and abuse of the northern press. As a consequence, the little Sumter was denounced, without stint, by the Yankee press. She was called a “pirate” and other hard names, and the most summary vengeance was denounced against her commander, and all who served under him.

Raphael Semmes –Memoirs of Service Afloat. (1869) p232



...acted out in the theatres.

Each imaginary gigantic creature resurfaced in the papers, admittedly short of good copy: from the white whale, that terrible ‘Moby Dick’ of the polar regions, to the enormous Kraken, whose tentacles can enlase a 500-ton ship and drag it down into the depths of the sea.

Jules Verne Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea (1869) p7

The ship becomes a personification, she not only ‘walks the waters like a thing of life,’ but she speaks in moving accents to those capable of interpreting her.

Raphael Semmes – Memoirs of Service Afloat. (1869) Preface

On 13th April 1867, in a fine sea and moderate wind, the Scotia was at 45° 37' N, 15° 12' W.

At seventeen minutes past four in the afternoon, while the passengers were in the main saloon taking their lunch, a blow, hardly perceptible in fact, was felt on the hull of the Scotia, on the quarter a little behind the port wheel.

Captain Anderson had the engines stopped at once, while one of the sailors dived to assess the damage.

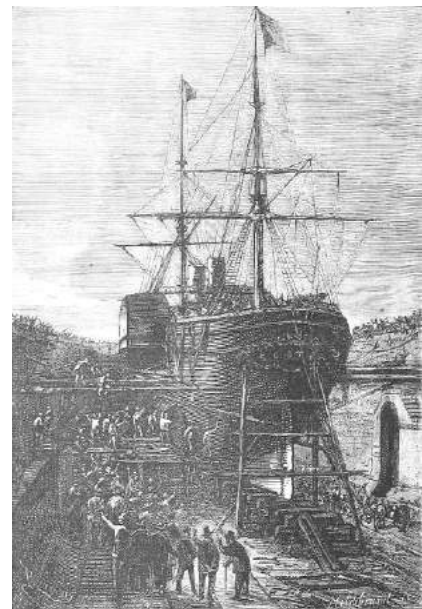
It was then three hundred miles from Cape Clear and was three days late when it sailed into the company docks, having greatly worried Liverpool.

The engineers then carried out an inspection of the Scotia, which was in dry dock. They couldn't believe their eyes. Two and a half metres below the water-line appeared a near hole in the form of an isosceles triangle.

*Such was the most recent event, which resulted in public opinion being stirred up once more. **Starting from that moment, maritime losses from unknown causes were simply attributed to the monster.***

The public spoke its mind and categorically demanded that the oceans be finally rid of this formidable cetacean, whatever the cost.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869)



The Engineers Visited the Scotia.

It was as though a great sea-monster had crawled in under cover of the night, and was eying its prey, and licking its chops, in anticipation of a delicious repast.

Raphael Semmes – *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869)

The Captain of the real-life SS Scotia was Charles Judkins of the Royal Mersey Yacht Club of Tranmere, Birkenhead. Judkins, while captain of the Cambria in 1847 and had famously punched a southern slave owner to the ground to allow the freed slave Frederick Douglass to give an onboard talk about the evils of slavery.

Eventually the ship, the second largest in the world was converted to a telegraphic cable layer by Laird's shipyard of Birkenhead. Cables are a running theme throughout our story.

CHAPTER II

PROS AND CONS

The New York Herald even challenged 'the honourable Pierre Arronax, lecturer at the Paris Museum', to formulate an opinion of some sort.

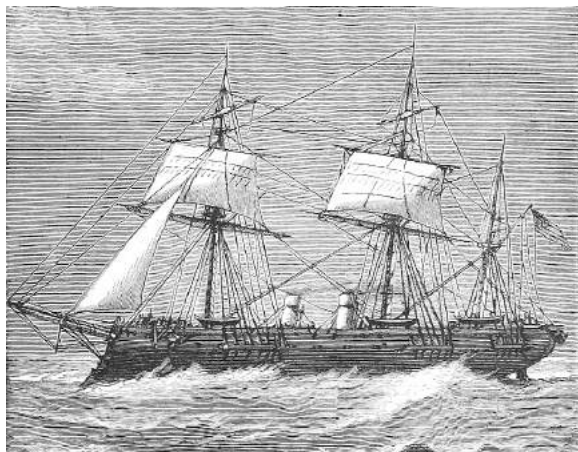
The owner of the New York Herald – Gordon Bennett was a close associate of the Royal Mersey Yacht Club at Tranmere, Birkenhead.

The narwhal is armed with a kind of ivory sword, a halberd in the terminology of certain naturalists. This is a principal tooth with the hardness of steel. Some of these teeth have been found embedded in the bodies of whales, which the narwhal always attacks with success. Others have been removed, not without difficulty, from the hulls of vessels that have been pierced through and through, like a drill through a barrel.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p14

The full-grown sword-fish has been known to pierce a ship's bottom, floor timbers and all, with its most formidable weapon.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p225



Since public opinion had come to a decision, the States of the Union spoke out first. Preparations were made in New York for an expedition to hunt the narwhal. A fast frigate, the Abraham Lincoln, made ready to sail at almost no notice.

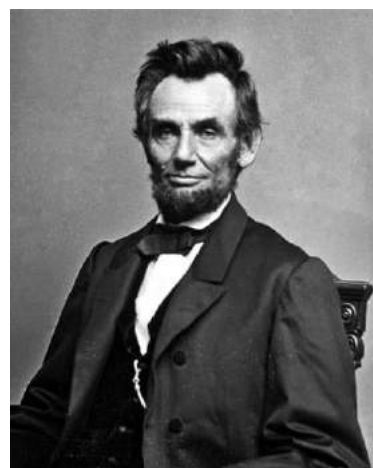
Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p15

The Frigate Abraham Lincoln

“And I hereby proclaim, and declare, that, if any person, under the pretended authority of said States, or under any other pretence, shall molest a vessel of the United States, or the persons, or cargo on board of her, such persons will be held amenable to the laws of the United States, for the prevention, and punishment of piracy.”

**Raphael Semmes quoting Abraham Lincoln.
Memoirs of Service Afloat. (1869). P178**

President Abraham Lincoln (1809-65)



CHAPTER III

AS MONSIEUR PLEASES



I realised that my real vocation, my main aim in life, was to pursue this disturbing monster and rid the world of it.



Sometimes leaning on the rear rail.

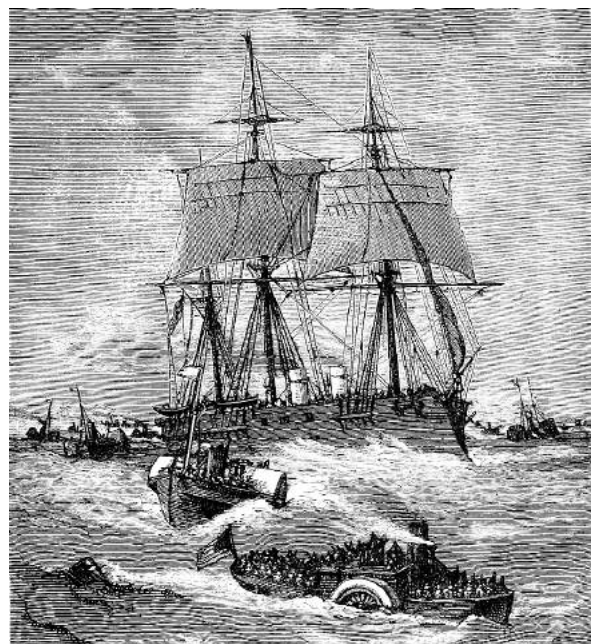
A few minutes later we were standing on the quayside where the Abraham Lincoln was spewing out torrents of black smoke through its twin funnels. Our bags were immediately transported on to the frigates deck.

The blades of the propeller beat the waves with increasing speed as the Abraham Lincoln advanced majestically through the midst of a hundred ferry boats and tenders filled with a retinue of spectators.

The wharfs of Brooklyn and the rest of New York lining the east river were covered with bystanders.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p20

The Procession Followed the Frigate.



CHAPTER IV

NED LAND

*They watched the sea very closely, **Captain Farragut** had in fact mentioned a sum of \$2,000 dollars for the first person to spot the animal, whether cabin boy, able seaman, mate or officer. So I leave to your imagination how much the men on board the Abraham Lincoln used their eyes.*

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p22

*The reader will see how many faithful auxiliaries, **Admiral Farragut** later found.*

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p110

Rear Admiral David Farragut was the highest-ranking officer in the U.S. Navy during the American Civil War. He was eventually delegated the major responsibility by Abraham Lincoln to search and find Raphael Semmes and the CSS *Alabama*.

Abraham Lincoln offered a reward of \$500,000 for the capture of the CSS *Alabama* and \$300,000 if she was sunk.



Admiral David Farragut 1801-70.

Thus every means of destruction was available on board the Abraham Lincoln. But there was better than this. There was Ned Land King of the Harpooners.



Ned was a Canadian of almost unbelievable manual dexterity, unrivalled in his perilous profession. He possessed skill and composure, bravery and cunning to a remarkable degree, and it was an exceptionally devious whale or astute cachalot that could evade his harpoon.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869)

Ned Land was about forty years old.

CHAPTER V IN SEARCH OF ADVENTURE

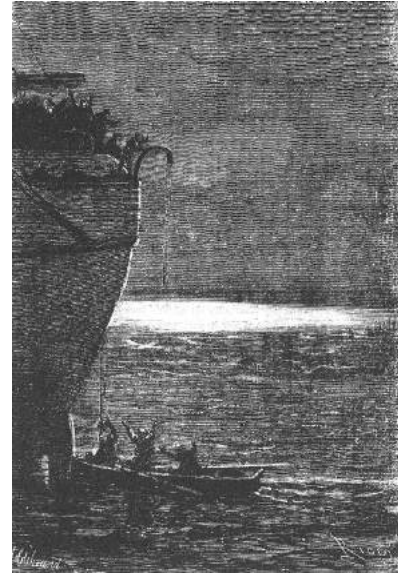
CHAPTER VI FULL STEAM AHEAD

The *Abraham Lincoln* eventually locates ‘the creature’.

Not far away from the *Abraham Lincoln*, on the starboard quarter, the sea looked **as if it was illuminated from below**. There could be no mistake, for this was no ordinary phosphorescence. Several fathoms below the surface, the monster gave forth a very strong, inexplicable light, as described in the reports of several captains.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p33

The monster submerged a few fathoms away.



Around the horizon there was a subdued glare, or flush, as though **there were a distant illumination going on**, whilst overhead there was a lurid, dark sky, in which the stars paled. The whole face of nature seemed changed, and with **but little stretch of the imagination, the Alabama might have been conceived to be a phantom ship, lighted up by the sickly and unearthly glare of a phantom sea**, and gliding on under the pale stars one knew not whither.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p733

The animal caught up with us with the greatest of ease. It swam round the frigate, which was making fourteen knots, and enclosed us in its electric beams like luminous dust.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p34

Like a cat, watching and playing with a victimized mouse, Captain Semmes permitted his prize to draw off a few yards, and then he up steam again, and pounced upon her. **She first sailed round the Yankee from stem to stern, and stern to stem again**. The way that fine, saucy, rakish craft was handled was worth riding a hundred miles to see.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p651

(Cape Town ‘Argus’ South Africa, 6th of August 1863).



The narwhal seemed to be motionless. Perhaps it felt tired after the day's exertions, and was sleeping in the rocking sway of the billows? This was an opportunity which Farragut decided to seize.

An old gunner with a grey beard.

*He gave a few orders. The frigate was put at easy speed and proceeded cautiously so as not to wake its enemy. **It is not rare to meet whales fast asleep in mid-ocean, and they are sometimes successfully attacked:** Ned Land had frequently harpooned them in this way.*

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p40

*The oil in the head, acting on the principle of the cork, enables it to ascend very rapidly, from great depths in the ocean, when it requires to breathe, or "blow." See how beautiful this oil arrangement is, too, in another aspect. **It enables the monster, when it requires rest, to lay its head on the softest kind of a pillow, an ocean wave, and sleep as unconcernedly as the child does upon the bosom of its mother.***

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p425

*The 'creature' retaliates and rams the *Abraham Lincoln* throwing Doctor Arronax, his assistant Conseil, as well as the harpoonist Ned Land into the water.*

There was an awesome impact and before I had time to take hold, I was thrown over the bulwark and into the sea.

While one of us lying on our back.



CHAPTER VII

AN UNKNOWN SPECIES OF WHALE

It was very dark. I could see a black object disappearing in the east, its position lights dimmed by the distance. It was the frigate. I felt lost.

At the same moment, in the last light of the moon going down over the horizon, I caught sight of another face, not Conseil's, which I immediately recognised.

'Ned!' I exclaimed.

'In person, sir, looking for his prize money!

'So you were thrown into the sea by the frigate's collision?'

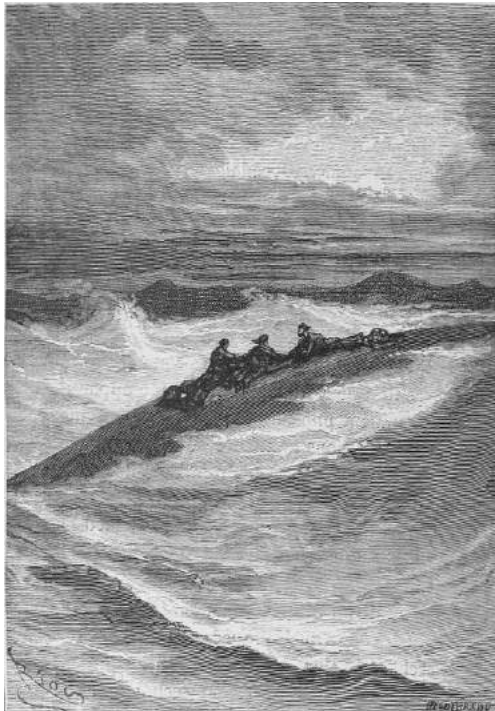
'Yes,' he replied; 'but I was luckier than you were, and managed to set foot on a floating island straightaway.'

'An island?'

'Yes, or rather upon our giant narwhal...'

'Explain yourself, Ned.'

'Though I soon realised why my harpoon hadn't stuck in the creature's hide and why it was blunted.



'But why, Ned, why?'

'Because the beast is made of steel plate!'

Steel plates forged at the Laird's shipyard of Birkenhead.

We were on the back of a submarine ship.

I pulled myself up to the top of the half-sunken being or object on which we had taken refuge.

But there was no room for doubt. Here we were sitting on the back of a species of submarine boat, with the shape of a massive steel fish, in so far as I could judge. Such was Ned's firm opinion. Conseil and I had no choice but to agree with him.

Daylight appeared. The morning mist wrapped us in its folds but was then torn asunder. I was about to make a careful survey of the hull, whose upper part formed a kind of horizontal platform, when I realised that it was slowly sinking.

'Hay!' What the Hell!' cried Ned, loudly stamping on the hull. 'Open up, I say, you pirates.

But it was difficult to produce a sound while the screw was beating vigorously. Fortunately the sinking stopped.

Suddenly a sound was heard from inside the boat of bars being pushed back. A plate was raised; a man appeared, uttered a strange cry, and immediately vanished.

A few seconds later, eight strong fellows with expressionless faces silently appeared and pulled us into their formidable machine.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p47

CHAPTER VIII

MOBILIS IN MOBILE

*This action, so roughly executed, was carried out with lightning speed. My companions and I had no time to look around. I do not know what Ned and Conseil felt as they entered the floating prison, but for my part I must say that a rapid shudder chilled my skin. Who are we dealing with? **Doubtless pirates of a new sort, who were using the seas for their own purposes.***

'My opinion's already formed,' countered Ned. 'They are rogues.'

'All right; but from what country?'

'From the land of rogues.'

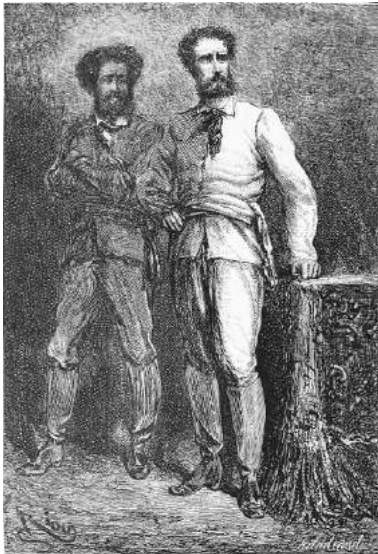
Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p52

Britain is the *land of rogues*.

Harpers Weekly c1863.



The sound came of bolts being withdrawn, the door opened, and two men came in.



The taller of the two – evidently the chief on board – regarded us with great concentration but without speaking. Then turning to his companion, he conversed with him in a tongue I could not understand.

Nemo's second in Command appears to be of mixed race.

This character was thirty five to fifty years old.

Our last attempt having totally failed, the two strangers exchanged a few words in their incomprehensible idiom and then withdrew, not even giving us one of those reassuring signs understood in every country in the world. The door closed behind them again.

The door opened as he was speaking. A steward entered. He brought us clothing: jackets and sea trousers of a material I could not identify. I quickly put them on, with my companions following suit.

During this time the steward – dumb, and perhaps deaf as well – laid three places at the table.

*The dishes, with silver covers, were placed harmoniously on the cloth, and we took our places. We were decidedly dealing with civilized beings; and had it not been for the electric light flooding over us, **I would have thought we were sitting at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool or the Grand Hotel in Paris.***

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p53

Prior to his sailing on the SS *Great Eastern* from Birkenhead to New York, Jules Verne stayed at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool for several days in March 1867. Charles Dickens stayed at the same hotel just three weeks later.



The table service was elegant, and in perfect taste. Every knife, fork, spoon, plate and utensil was inscribed with a letter surrounded by a motto, of which the following is an exact facsimile.

MOBILIS IN MOBILE.

N

Mobile in the mobile element! The device fitted the submarine vessel perfectly, provided the Latin preposition 'in' was translated as 'in' rather than 'on'.

The N was no doubt the initial of the enigmatical individual who commanded at the depths of the ocean.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p54

The origin of Captain Nemo's motto has long remained a mystery.

William Butcher in his notes on his 2005 translation of *Mysterious Island* states the following;

In Latin "Mobilis" means "nimble, lively; shifting, changeable; inconstant, or fickle," and thus "MOBILIS IN MOBILI" can be translated as "Mobile in the Mobile Element" or "Changing within Change." In Twenty Thousand Leagues, the successive editions show repeated corrections of the six occurrences of "Mobili" to "Mobile" (although the monogram itself continued to read "Mobili" in the 1871 edition). So it is surprising to see "MOBILI" re-emerging in Mysterious Island even if both the ablative noun "Mobile" and the ablative adjective "Mobili" are correct.

The Latin clue, given by Jules Verne, is however a literary decoy - Raphael Semmes will give us the definitive explanation of Captain Nemo's motto;

I had been for many years a resident citizen of Alabama, having removed to this state in 1841, and settled with my family, on the west bank of the Perdido; removing thence in a few years to Mobile.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p75.

CHAPTER IX NED LAND'S FITS OF ANGER

CHAPTER X THE MAN OF THE SEA

'And if these pirates – I use the word with all due respect, and to avoid upsetting the professor who won't let us call them cannibals – if these pirates imagine that they are going to keep me prisoner in this suffocating cell without learning what swear words I use to spice up my fits of anger, then they are making a serious mistake. Look here, Dr Arronax, and tell me frankly: do you think we'll be in this iron crate for long?'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p57

Raphael Semmes would share Ned Land's disdain of Captain Nemo's Nautilus.

In future wars upon the ocean, all combatants will be on the dead level of impenetrable iron walls, with regard to dash, and courage, and with regard to seamanship, and evolutions, all the knowledge that will be required of them, will be to know how to steer a nondescript box toward their enemy.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p150

The commander, leaning against the side of the table, his arms crossed, regarded us with very great attention.

'I will merely be Captain Nemo for you, and you and your companions will simply be for me the passengers of the Nautilus.

'Monsieur,' said I, 'you are not aware of the discussions about you which have taken place in Europe and America. You do not know that the various accidents you have caused by the collisions with your submarine have stirred public opinion on both continents. I spare you the countless hypotheses which people have constructed to explain the inexplicable phenomenon of which you alone possessed the secret. But you must realise that in pursuing you even to the heart of the Pacific, the Abraham Lincoln's crew were under the impression that they were pursuing some powerful marine monster, which it was necessary to rid the ocean at any cost'.

'You are my prisoners after the battle. I am holding you when, with just a word, I could have you thrown back into the depths of the ocean. You attacked me. You came and discovered a secret that no man on earth must penetrate – the secret of my entire existence. And you imagine that I am going to send you back to shore, where nothing is known about me any longer? Never! By holding you, it is not you that I am protecting, but myself.'

In the centre of the room stood a richly laid table. Captain Nemo indicated the place where I was to sit down.

‘So all this food is produced by the sea?’

‘Yes, the sea provides for all my needs.

My chef is skilful and is very good at preserving the various products of the ocean. Taste all these dishes. Here is sea slug jam that a Malay would declare without equal anywhere in the world.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p68



I was surprised to find a very tempting-looking dish of fried fish set out before me, and upon inquiring of my faithful steward, John, (a Malayan, who had taken the place of Ned...).

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p224

‘You love the sea.’ Captain.

‘Yes, I do love it! The sea is everything. It covers seven-tenths of the terrestrial globe. Its breadth is healthy and pure. It is a spacious wilderness where man is never alone, for he can feel life throbbing all around him. The sea is the environment for a prodigious, supernatural existence, it is nothing but movement and love; it is a living infinity, as one of your poets has said. And indeed, sir, nature is present there in its three kingdoms, animal, vegetable and mineral.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p68

The waving ferns, fans, and palms are all instinct with animal life. The patient little toiler of the sea, the coralline insect, is busy with them, as he is with his limestone trees. He is helping on their formation by his secretions, and it is difficult to say what portion of them is vegetable, what, mineral, and what, animal.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p171

The sea does not belong to despots. On the surface immoral rights can still be claimed, men can fight each other, devour each other, and carry out all the earth’s atrocities. But thirty feet below the surface their power ceases, their influence fades, their authority disappears. Ah, sir, live, live in the heart of the sea! Independence is possible only here! Here I recognise no master! Here I am free!’

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p69

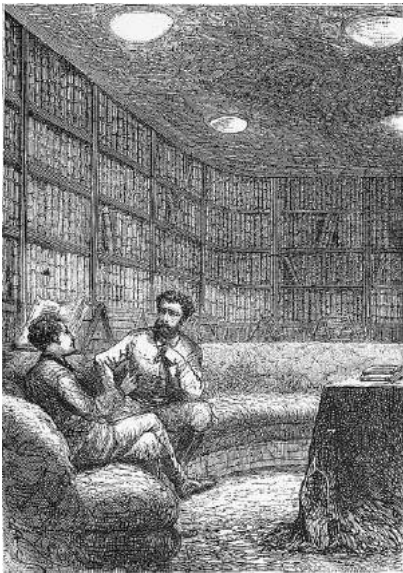
Thirty feet is the vertical difference between the highest and lowest tides on the River Mersey.

CHAPTER XI

THE NAUTILUS

Captain Nemo got up. I followed him. A double door opened at the back of the room, and I discovered a room of the same size as the one I had just left.

It was a library. Tall furniture, made of black rosewood and inset with brass, bore on its long shelves a large number of books with uniform bindings. The shelves followed the shape of the room, with vast settees below them, upholstered in brown leather and offering the most comfortable of curves.



This room is not just a library,’ responded Captain Nemo, ‘it’s also a smoking room.’

‘A smoking-room? Do people smoke on board?’

‘They do.’

‘Then I must conclude that you have maintained relations with Havana.’

‘Not at all. Please accept this cigar, Dr Aronnax, and although it does not come from Havana, you will appreciate it if you are a connoisseur.’

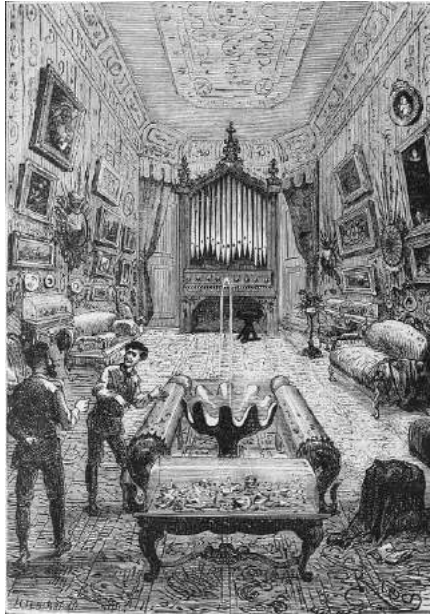
*I took the cigar offered. **The shape reminded me of a Havana cigar, but the leaves seemed to be golden.** I lit it using a small lighter on an elegant bronze stand, and I breathed the first mouthfuls in with all the delight of a smoker who has not indulged for two days.*

‘It is excellent, but it is not tobacco.’ ‘Correct; this tobacco does not come from Havana or the east. It is a sort of seaweed rich in nicotine that the sea provides me, rather sparingly in fact.’

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p71

*The engineer coming on board, one day, from one of his excursions, pulled out his cigar case, and offered me **a very tempting Havana cigar. Imagine my surprise when I found it a piece of wood! It had been plucked fresh from the tree.** The size, shape, and color—a rich brown—were all perfect. It was not a capsule or a seed-pod, but a solid piece of wood, with the ordinary woody fibre, and full of sap.*

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p703



You are examining my shells, sir. They may indeed interest a scientist; but for me they have an additional charm, as I collected them all myself. There is not a sea on the surface of the globe that I have not searched.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p75

At other times I would coast the island along for miles, now putting into one little cove, and now into another, sometimes fishing, and at others hunting sea-shells, and exploring the wonders of the coral banks...

...I put it away carefully among my curiosities, but after a few days it shrivelled, and lost its beauty.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p518

I followed Captain Nemo through one of the doors in the two oblique angles in the sitting-room, and into the ship's gangways. He took me forward and there I found not a cabin but an elegant bedroom, complete with a bed, dressing table, and several other pieces of furniture.

'Your bedroom is next to mine,' he said opening the door, 'and mine leads into the salon we have just left.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p76

I bestowed the ladies, with their husbands, upon the ward-room mess, consigning them to the care of my gallant friend, Kell. Some of the lieutenants were turned out of their state-rooms, for their accommodation, but being carpet knights, as well as knights of the lance, they submitted to the discomfort with becoming grace.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869). p497

CHAPTER XII

ALL BY ELECTRICITY.

I followed Captain Nemo through one of the gangways situated along the sides of the ship, and arrived at its centre. Here there was a sort of open shaft between two watertight compartments. An iron ladder, fixed firmly to the wall led to the top of the stairwell.

I asked the captain what the ladder was for.

'It goes up to the small dinghy.'

'What, you have a dinghy!' I replied in astonishment.

'But of course. An excellent craft, light and unsinkable, which we use for excursions and for fishing.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p80

My gig was a fine boat, fitted with a lug sail, and I used frequently to stretch off long distances from the land in her, enjoying her fine sailing qualities, in the fresh sea-breeze that would be blowing, the greater part of the day... Pelican, gulls, plover, and sand-snipe were abundant, and my boat's crew, when we would land, and haul our boat up for a stroll, would sometimes make capital shots.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869). p518

'But then don't you have to go up to the surface, when you want to use the boat?'

'Not at all. The dinghy is fixed to the upper part of the Nautilus's hull, in a recess designed for it.

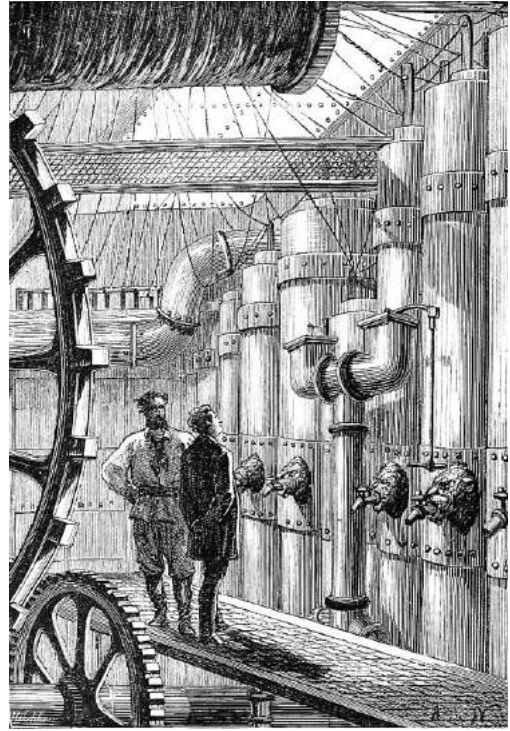
Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p80

The Alabama was so constructed, that in fifteen minutes, her propeller could be detached from the shaft, and lifted in a well contrived for the purpose, sufficiently high out of the water, not to be an impediment to her speed. When this was done, and her sails spread, she was, to all intents and purposes, a sailing-ship.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat* (1869) p403

All the cooking was done with electricity, even more powerful and obedient than gas. The wires under the cookers evenly distributed and maintained the heat over the platinum plates. The electricity also heated distillation devices which used evaporation to provide excellent drinking water.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p80



all the water that was drank on board the Alabama was condensed by the engine from the vapor of sea-water. The consequence of all this care was highly gratifying to me, as, in the three years I was afloat, I did not lose a man by disease, in either of my ships!

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat* (1869). p452



CHAPTER XIII

SOME FIGURES



A moment later, we were sitting on a divan in the drawing-room, smoking cigars. The captain showed me a blueprint containing the floor plan, section, and elevation of the Nautilus. Then he began his description as follows:

*'The various dimensions of the ship you are in as follows. **It is an elongated cylinder with conical ends. Its shape is quite close to that of a cigar,** a design already adopted in London for several constructions of the same sort. The cylinder measures exactly 70 metres from end to end, and its beam is 8 metres at its widest point.*

It is not therefore constructed on an exact ratio of one to ten like your fast steamships, but its lines are sufficiently long and its run extensive enough for the displaced water to escape easily and to provide no obstacle to headway.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p82

Semmes made a present of cigars to his crew when he plundered and burned the clipper ship *Winged Racer*. The crew of the *Alabama* were furious that they did not get 'double pay in gold' and instead threw the cigars overboard.

The *Alabama* 'cigar mutiny' threatened Semmes's authority on board. Semmes downplayed the incident in his memoirs, but Jules Verne will bring the subject of cigars and tobacco up many times as he incessantly lampoons Raphael Semmes.

Raphael Semmes's would not be amused by the underhand submarine ram, in shape *close to that of a cigar* imposed upon him by Jules Verne.

Indeed, it seems Semmes would retaliate against Jules Verne with one of the most stunningly written passages in his *Memoirs of Service Afloat During the War Between the States*.

There is the same difference between the old-time sailor, who has been bred in the sailing-ship, and the modern sailor of the steamship, that there is between the well-trained fox-hound, who chases Reynard all day, and the cur that dodges a rabbit about, for half an hour or so. The sailing-ship has a romance, and a poetry about her, which is thoroughly killed by steam. The sailor of the former loves, for its own sake, the howling of the gale, and there is no music so sweet to his ear, as the shouting of orders through the trumpet of the officer of the deck, when he is poised upon the topsail-yard, of the rolling and tumbling ship, hauling out the "weather ear-ring." It is the ranz de vache, which recalls the memory of his boyhood, and youth, when under the tutelage of some foster-father of an old salt, he was taking his first lessons in seamanship.

It used to be beautiful to witness the rivalry of these children of the deep, when the pitiless hurricane was scourging their beloved ship, and threatening her with destruction. The greater the danger, the more eager the contest for the post of honor. Was there a sail to be secured, which appeared about to be torn into ribbons, by the gale, and the loose gear of which threatened to whip the sailor from the yard; or was there a topmast to be climbed, which was bending like a willow wand under the fury of the blast, threatening to part at every moment, and throw the climber into the raging, and seething caldron of waters beneath, from which it would be impossible to rescue him, Jack, noble Jack was ever ready for the service. I have seen an old naval captain, who had been some years retired from the sea, almost melt into tears, as he listened to the musical "heaving of the lead" by an old sailor, in the "chains" of a passing ship of war.

But steam, practical, commonplace, hard-working steam, has well-nigh changed all this, and cut away the webbing from the foot of the old-time sailor. Seamanship, evolutions, invention, skill, and ready resource in times of difficulty, and danger, have nearly all gone out of fashion, and instead of reefing the topsails, and club-hauling, and box-hauling the ship, some order is now sent to the engineer, about regulating his fires, and paying attention to his steam-gauges. Alas! alas! there will be no more Nelsons, and Collingwoods, and no more such venerable "bulwarks upon the deep," as the Victory, and the Royal Sovereign. In future wars upon the ocean, all combatants will be on the dead level of impenetrable iron walls, with regard to dash, and courage, and with regard to seamanship, and evolutions, all the knowledge that will be required of them, will be to know how to steer a nondescript box toward their enemy.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p149

"I agree with you," said I; "and steam seems to have killed all gratitude in the hearts of sailors.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p213

'Ah captain , ' I exclaimed with conviction, 'Your Nautilus is truly a magnificent ship!'

'Yes sir, ' responded Captain Nemo with genuine emotion, 'and I love it like the flesh of my flesh!'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p86

I had surveyed my new ship, as we approached, with no little interest, as she was to be not only my home, but my bride.

When her awnings were snugly spread, her yards squared, and her rigging hauled taut, she looked like a bride, with the orange-wreath about her brows, ready to be led to the altar.

A ship, going to sea, is like a woman going on a journey—many last things remaining to be attended to, at the moment of departure.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat.* (1869). p404

And if the engineer has clearly more confidence in his ship than its constructor, and the constructor more than the captain, you can understand with what entire confidence I entrusted myself to the Nautilus, since I am at one and the same time the captain, the constructor, and the engineer!

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p87.

*The captain, builder and engineer make up but part of the complex identity of Captain Nemo for he is Captain Raphael Semmes of the CSS *Alabama*, John Laird, the builder of the CSS *Alabama*, James Dunwoody Bulloch, the engineer of the CSS *Alabama*.*

'But how could you construct this wonderful Nautilus in secret?'

*'Each of its components, Dr Arronax, was sent to me from a different point on the globe via a forwarding address. Its keel was forged by Le Creusot, its propeller shaft by Penn and Co. of London, the iron plates for its hull by **Laird's of Liverpool**, and its propeller by Scott & Co. of Glasgow. Its tanks were constructed by Cail and Co. of Paris, its engine by Krupp of Prussia, its cutwater by the workshops at Motala in Sweden, its precision instruments by Hart Brothers of New York, and so on; with each of the suppliers receiving my plans under a different name.'*

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p87

*The fact is, as the reader has seen, that the *Alabama* was built by the **Messrs. Laird of Birkenhead**, under a contract with the Confederate States, and was paid for out of the Confederate Treasury. She happened to be the 290th ship built by those gentlemen, and hence the name.*

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat.* (1869) p401

'But' I countered, 'once these pieces had been made, they still had to be assembled and adjusted?'

'I set up my workshops on a small desert island in the middle of the ocean. There with my workmen, that is my good companion whom I instructed and trained, I completed our Nautilus.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p87

The 'small desert island' is revealed as Lincoln Island in Verne's novel *Mysterious Island* (1874) - Lincoln Island is of course based on the town of Birkenhead.

An alternative translation of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* states the following;

*Then, when the work was finished fire destroyed all trace of our proceedings on **this island**, that I could have jumped over if I had liked.*

At the end of *Mysterious Island* (1874), the whole of Lincoln Island blows up leaving the survivors stranded on a small piece of rock *that I could have jumped over if I had liked.*

This is actually the 'Little Eye' - the smallest of the Hilbre Islands. In the last line of *Mysterious Island*, Verne refers to this small piece of rock as *the tomb of the man who had once been Captain Nemo*. It suggests he had both the plot of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* and its sequel *The Mysterious Island* all mapped out at one and the same time.



The Little Eye at West Kirby - *the tomb of the man who had once been Captain Nemo!*

The CSS *Alabama* of course was also completed on a 'desert island'.

I was charmed with the appearance of Terceira. Every square foot of the island seemed to be under the most elaborate cultivation...we arrived at Angra at four o'clock, on the same afternoon. Here the transhipment of the guns and stores was renewed, and here, for the first time, I visited the Alabama.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p407

The language spoken by the crew members of the *Nautilus* is an enigma to Doctor Pierre Arronax.

Then turning to his companion, he conversed with him in a tongue could not understand. The language was ringing harmonious, and supple, with the syllables seeming to receive very varied stresses. The other replied with a movement of his head, adding two or three totally unintelligible words.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p50

Semmes would concur;

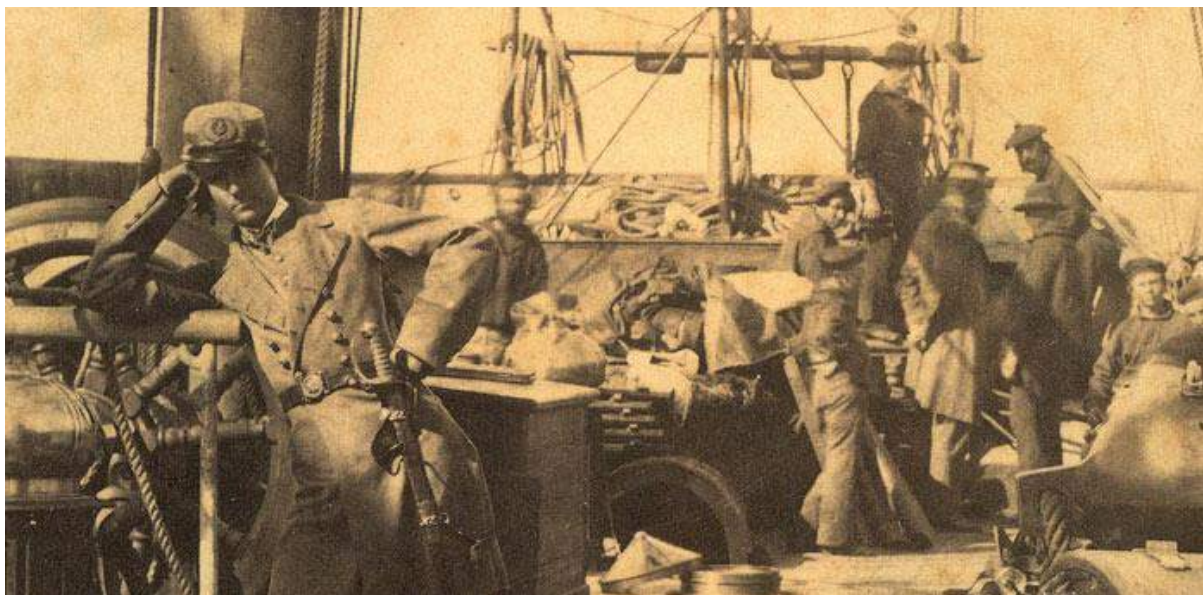
The crew, comprising about sixty persons, who had been picked up, promiscuously, about the streets of Liverpool, were as unpromising in appearance, as things about the decks...

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p405

Raphael Semmes himself would explain the multinational nature of Captain Nemo and his crew.

With rare exceptions, a common sailor has no sense of nationality. He commences his sea-going career at so tender an age, is so constantly at sea, and sails under so many different flags, that he becomes eminently a citizen of the world.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p300



The crew picked up promiscuously, about the streets of Liverpool.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BLACK RIVER

'And now, Dr Arronax,' added the captain, I will leave you to your studies. I have set an east-north-easterly course at 50 metres' depth. Here are large scale maps where you can follow our movements. The salon is at your disposal and with your permission I will now retire.

Captain Nemo bowed to me.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p90

I never permit myself to be outdone in politeness, and treated them with all consideration.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p249

During this time Land, who was not much of a conchologist, was asking about my discussion with Captain Nemo. Had I found out who he was, where he was from, where he was going, how deep he was going to take us – in sum, a thousand questions which I had no time to reply to.

I told him what I knew, or rather everything I did not know, and asked in turn what he had seen or heard.

'Seen nothing, heard nothing! I haven't even seen the crew of this boat. Are they also electric, do you think?'

'I cannot say, Master Land. In any case believe me, give up for the moment any idea of taking over the Nautilus and escaping. This boat is a masterpiece of modern technology, and I would regret not seeing it! Many people would willingly accept the situation we are now in, if only in order to stroll through its wonders. So please remain calm, and try to observe what is going on around us.'

'Observe!' exclaimed the harpooner. 'But we can't see anything, we will never see anything out of this metal prison!'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869).

A Window open on these unexplored abysses.



CHAPTER XV

A WRITTEN INVITATION

Our host kept his side of the bargain. We had no grounds for complaint, and in any case the strangeness of our situation provided us with such superb compensation that we did not yet have the right to criticise it.

16th of November, 1867.

Dr Arronax

On board the Nautilus

Captain Nemo invites Dr Aronnax on a hunting party which will visit his forests of Crespo Island tomorrow morning. He hopes that nothing will prevent Dr Arronax from attending, and he would be pleased if his companions could join him.

Captain Nemo

Commander of the Nautilus

"Hunting! " exclaimed Ned.

"In the forests of Crespo Island!" added Conseil.

'So that individual does visit land sometimes?' enquired Ned Land.

Without trying to make sense of the discrepancy between Captain Nemo's manifest horror for landmasses and islands and his invitations to go hunting in forests, I merely replied:

'Let's see first of all what Crespo Island is.'

I consulted the planisphere, and at latitude 32 degrees 40 minutes north and longitude 167 degrees and fifty minutes west I found a tiny island chartered by Captain Crespo in 1801, that the old Spanish maps called Roca de la Plata, meaning Silver Rock.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p101

The island of Crespo is found on historical maps but there is no physical evidence that it ever existed. Although 'discovered' in 1801 there is nothing at that given location today - many now assume that Captain Crespo only saw a formation of clouds.

This is phenomena was fully described by Raphael Semmes in his *Memoirs of Service Afloat*.

On the next day, we witnessed a curious natural illusion. The look-out called land ho! from the mast-head. The officer of the watch saw the land at the same time from the deck, and sent a midshipman below to inform me that we had made "high land, right ahead." I came at once upon deck, and there, sure enough, was the land—a beautiful island, with its blue mountains, its plains, its wood-lands, its coast, all perfect. It was afternoon. The weather had been stormy, but had partially cleared. The sun was near his setting, and threw his departing rays full upon the newly discovered island, hanging over it, as a symbol that, for a time, there was to be a truce with the storm, a magnificent rainbow. So beautiful was the scene, and so perfect the illusion—there being no land within a couple of hundred miles of us—that all the crew had come on deck to witness it; and there was not one of them who would not have bet a month's pay that what he looked upon was a reality.

The chief engineer was standing by me looking upon the supposed landscape, with perfect rapture. Lowering the telescope through which I had been viewing it, I said to him, "You see, now, Mr. F., how often men are deceived. You would no doubt swear that that is land." "Why should I not, sir?" said he. "Simply," rejoined I, "because it is Cape Fly-away." He turned and looked at me with astonishment, as though I were quizzing him, and said, "You surely do not mean to say, Captain, that that is not land; it is not possible that one's senses can be so much deceived." "Like yourself, I should have sworn it was land, if I did not know, from the position of the ship, that there is no land within a couple of hundred miles of us." Reaching out his hand for my glass, I gave it to him, and as he viewed the island through it, I was much amused at his ejaculations of admiration, now at this beauty, and now at that.

"Why," said he, "there is the very coast, sand beach and all, with beautiful bays and indentations, as though inviting the Sumter to run in and anchor." As the sun sank lower and lower, withdrawing now one ray, and now another, first the rainbow began to disappear, and then the lower strata of the island to grow a little gray, and then the upper, until, as the sun dipped, the whole gorgeous fabric, of mountain, woodland, plain, and coast, was converted into a leaden-colored cloud-bank. The engineer handing me my glass, said, "Captain, I will be a cautious witness hereafter, in a court of justice, when I am questioned as to a fact, which has only been revealed to me through a single sense." "I see," I replied, "that you are becoming a philosopher. Many metaphysicians have maintained that all nature is a mere phantasmagoria, so far as our senses are capable of informing us."

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat.* (1869) p286

At first Captain Nemo ate without a word. Then he said:

'When I suggested that you accompany me to the forests of Crespo, you thought I was contradicting myself. When I informed you that they were underwater forests, you thought I was mad. Sir, you should never judge men too quickly.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p103

I did honour to the meal.



CHAPTER XV

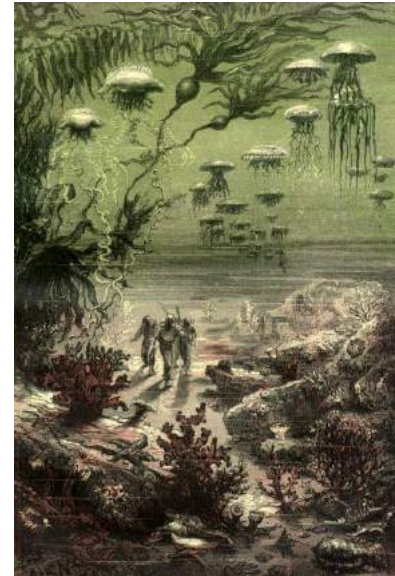
AN EXCURSION OVER THE PLAINS

'But my good Ned,' I told him, 'the forests of Crespo Island are actually underwater forests!'

The light astonished me with its penetration, for it lit up the ground as far as 30 feet below the surface. The sunlight traversed the aqueous substance easily but its colours dissipated. I could clearly see objects 100 metres away. Beyond that, the depths were tinted in fine shades of ultramarine, becoming bluer in the distance and fading into a sort of nebulous darkness. The water surrounding me was really a sort of air, denser than the terrestrial atmosphere but almost as clear. I could see the calm surface of the sea above my head.

Will I believe if I say that at a depth of 30 feet, I could see as clearly as in the open air?

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p108



The tidal range on the Wirral coast is thirty feet between the highest and lowest tides – is Verne still on the Wirral and walking in the open air on the seabed when the tide is fully out? The fact that he may be in the open air (just like he would in one of his stage plays) at low tide would account for the clarity of 'water'. This writing style would allow Verne to use Wirral locations on land to continue to inspire scenes beneath the sea.

Submarine forests may be the real forests of the Wirral – hence the all-too-common comparison to surface fauna and features. Raphael Semmes would seem to concur in what may be a two-way channel of communication.

The sea, by this time, had become quite smooth, and the rays of a bright sun penetrated the clear waters to the very bottom of the shoal, revealing everything to us, as clearly as though the medium through which we were viewing it were atmosphere instead of water.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p134

At this moment, Captain Nemo stopped. He waited for me to catch up, and pointed to some dark masses against the shadows not far away. 'These must be the forests of Crespo Island,' I thought. I was not mistaken.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p111

CHAPTER XVII

AN UNDERWATER FOREST

*I soon got used to this bizarre location and to the semi-darkness surrounding us. The ground of the forest was studded with sharp rocks, difficult to avoid. The underwater seemed relatively complete, even richer perhaps than in a tropical or arctic region, where there is less variety. For a while, however, **I involuntarily mixed up the kingdoms, taking zoophytes for hydrophytes. Animals for plants. And who wouldn't have made such a mistake? Flora and fauna were so close in this submarine world!***

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p112

*The waving ferns, fans, and palms are all instinct with animal life. The patient little toiler of the sea, **the coralline insect, is busy with them, as he is with his limestone trees. He is helping on their formation by his secretions, and it is difficult to say what portion of them is vegetable, what, mineral, and what, animal.***

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat* (1869) p174

At about one o'clock Captain Nemo gave the signal for a halt. For my part I was quite pleased, as we stretched out under a bower of aralias, whose long thin blades stood up like arrows.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p113

The signal for a halt at one o'clock may be a reference to the Birkenhead One O'clock gun, suggesting we may still be on the Wirral. Is Verne writing about the famous ancient, submerged forest on the north Wirral coast? The preserved tree stumps are 6,000 years old and formed long thin blades. They would be within earshot of the Birkenhead One O'clock gun.



The Wirral submerged forest was also written about by Robert Stevenson (the grandfather of Robert Louis Stevenson) in 1828.

It is the only notable Wirral landform as yet unaccounted for in the novels of Jules Verne. Is Verne in the open air?

The long thin blades of of the Meols submerged forest. North Wirral coast c1890.

It must have been about three o'clock when we reached a narrow valley between high vertical walls, at about 150 metres depth.

Finally, at about four o'clock, our marvellous expedition came to an end. A superb rock wall of imposing height rose up in front of us: a jumble of gigantic blocks, an enormous cliff of granite, with dark grottoes leading into it but no practical way up. This was the coast of Crespo Island. This was land.

This sounds suspiciously like the narrow valley trench of the tidal gauging station at the north end of Hilbre Island and the steep cliff behind.

*At 10 metres' depth we were walking through a swarm of small fish of every small fish of every sort, **more numerous than the birds of the air**, and more lively; but no aquatic game worth a gun-shot had yet appeared before our eyes.*

All of a sudden, I saw the captain rapidly aiming his weapon and following an object moving amongst the shrubbery. The shot went off, I heard a faint hissing sound, and an animal fell stricken a few places away.

*It was a **magnificent sea otter**, an enhydra, the only quadruped that is exclusively marine.*

It was then that I witnessed one of the finest gun shots ever to play on the heart -strings of a hunter. A big bird with a large wingspan, very clearly visible, was gliding towards us.

*Captain Nemo's companion aimed and shot at it when it was only a few metres above the waves. The animal fell down dead, and dropped down within reach of the skilfull hunter, who seized hold of it. It was an **albatross** of the highest sort, an admirable specimen of those pelagic birds.*

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p116

The illustration supports the idea of being in the open air. A large bird approached while hovering.



On the occasion of one of the short calms described, we caught an **albatross, with a hook and line, which measured ten feet across the wings. The monster bird was very fat, and it was quite a lift to get it inboard.**

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869).

Half an hour later, guided by the electric beam, we reached the Nautilus. The outside was still open, and Captain Nemo closed it as soon as we were back inside the first compartment.

CHAPTER XVIII

FOUR THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE PACIFIC

These nets had been dragging for several hours and had captured a whole aquatic world in their stranded prison. We were guaranteed food of excellent quality as many times as wished, thanks to the Nautilus's speed and the attraction of its electric light.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p119

And some of the seamen resorted to an ingenious device for entrapping the flying fish by night. A net being spread with outriggers, under the bow of the ship and a light being held just above it....

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869).

I was getting ready to return to my room, when Captain Nemo turned to me and said without preamble.

,

'Look at the ocean, Dr Arronax, is it not endowed with an authentic life of its own? Does it not have its angers and its moments of tenderness. Yesterday it went to sleep just like us, and now it is waking up again after a peaceful night.

'Look,' he continued; 'it is waking up in the sun's caresses! It is going to live its daily life again! How absorbing to study the full life of its organism! It has a pulse and arteries and it has spasms, and I fully support the scientist Maury, who discovered a circulation in it just as real as that of blood in animals.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p119

You could count these squid by the millions.



I refer my readers, curious in this matter, to the work of Captain Maury, entitled the "Physical Geography of the Sea." It is full of profound philosophy, on the subjects of which it treats, and is written in so pleasing a style, and is so strewn with flowers, as to make the reader forget that he is travelling the thorny paths of science.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p552

On 11 December I was reading in the salon. Ned Land and Conseil were observing the luminous waters through the half-open panels. The Nautilus was motionless. With tanks full, it lay at a depth of 1,000 metres, a sparsely inhabited region of the oceans, where only larger fish put in an occasional appearance.

The book I was reading was a charming one by Jean Mace called Les Serviteurs de l'estomac, and I was savouring its sagacious lessons, when Conseil interrupted my reading.

'Would monsieur please come here for a moment?' he said in an unusual tone.

'What is it, Conseil?'

'Something monsieur should see.'

I got up, went to lean on the glass, and gazed.

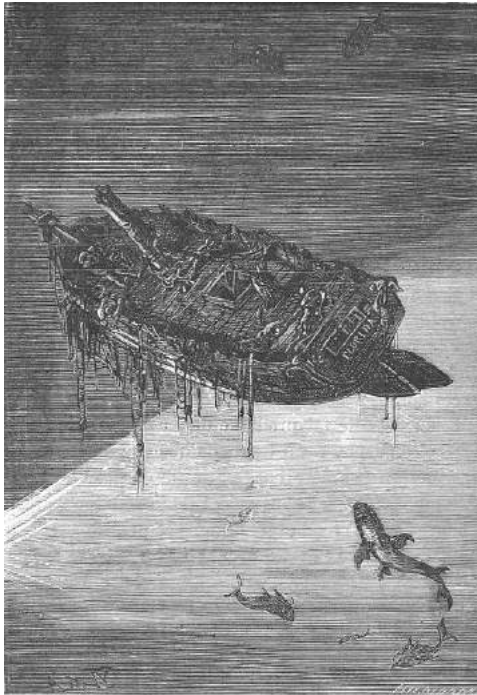
In the full electric light, an enormous blackish object was suspended motionless in the midst of the waters. I observed it attentively, trying to identify the gigantic cetacean. But a thought suddenly crossed my mind.

'A ship!' I exclaimed.

'Yes,' replied Ned Land, a crippled ship which went straight down!

He was correct. It was a ship with cut shrouds still hanging from their plates. Its hull seemed in good condition, and it could not have been wrecked for more than a few hours. The stumps of three masts, cut two feet above the deck, showed that the waterlogged ship must have sacrificed its masts. But it must have keeled sideways and filled up with water: it was still listing to port. A sad sight, this carcass lost beneath the waves; but sadder still, the sight of the deck where a few bodies still lay, made fast by ropes.

I counted four – all men, with one of them still standing at the helm – then a woman half emerging through the deadlight in the poop, holding a child with both arms. It was a young woman. I was able to identify her features, brightly lit in the Nautilus's lights and not yet decomposed by the water. In a supreme effort, she had raised the child above her head, a poor little being whose arms still clasped the neck of its mother! The positions of the four sailors were frightening, twisted as they were in convulsive movements, making a last effort to tear themselves from the ropes tying them to the ship. Only the helmsman, calmer, his face clear and serious, his greying hair stuck to his forehead, his hand tightly seizing the wheel, seemed still to be steering the wrecked three master through the ocean depths.



What a scene! We stood silent, our hearts beating hard, at the sight of this shipwreck captured in mid-act, photographed as it were at its ultimate moment! And already I could see huge sharks advancing, their eyes ablaze, drawn by the lure of human flesh!

The Nautilus had been manoeuvring around the submerged ship. For a brief moment I could read the board on its stern:

The Florida, Sunderland.

Jules Verne Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea (1869) p125

We were in the presence of a ship.

The CSS *Florida* was built by the William C Miller shipyard of Toxteth, Liverpool and was the first of the Confederate commerce raiders commissioned by Confederate Spy James Dunwoody Bulloch.

The Confederate Commerce Raider CSS *Florida*.



The Foreign Enlistment Act preserved Britain's neutrality in the American Civil War by forbidding the construction of warships for either side. Bulloch and his lawyer F.R. Hull skirted around this law by arming supposed merchant vessels outside of the United Kingdom's territorial waters.

Originally named the *Oreto*, the unarmed ship left Liverpool for the Bahamas in March 1862, there she was fitted with armaments and the crew placed under the command of John Maffitt. In many ways, she was the 'sister ship', of the CSS *Alabama* - launched just a few months later on the opposite side of the River Mersey at Birkenhead. The CSS *Florida*, eventually burned 33 Union vessels.

*To make a long story short, the gallant little **Florida** finally escaped her pursuers, and, in a shattered condition, ran in and anchored near Fort Morgan. As the reader may suppose, her English flag was exchanged for her own stars and bars, as soon as the enemy opened upon her. This was the most daring and gallant running of a blockade that occurred during a war so fruitful of daring and gallant acts. After repairing and refitting his vessel, my gallant friend dashed again through the enemy's fleet, now much increased in numbers, and commenced that career on the high seas, which has rendered his name one of the notable ones of the war. He lighted the seas with a track of fire, wherever he passed, and sent consternation and alarm among the enemy's shipping.*

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat.* (1869)

On 7th October 1862 the CSS *Florida* was attacked illegally within Brazilian territorial waters by Commander Napoleon Collins of the USS *Wachusett* and towed back to the United States as a 'prize'.

*The **Florida** coming into Bahia, a few months afterward, as related in a former page, a Federal ship of war violated the neutrality of the port, by seizing her, and carrying her off; and the Yankee nation, rather than make the amends which all the world decided it was bound to make, by delivering back the captured ship to Brazil, ordered her to be sunk by accident in Hampton Roads! The "trick" was eminently Yankee, and I presume could not possibly have been practised in any other civilized nation of the earth.*

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat.* (1869) p619

The Brazilian Government protested at this violation of its territorial waters and Commander Collins was subsequently court-martialled by the US Navy - the United States courts ordered the CSS *Florida* to be returned to Brazil.

Before she could be returned the CSS *Florida* sunk in dubious circumstances after a collision with the United States Army Transport ship *Alliance* on November 28th 1864 at Newport News Virginia.

Napoleon Collins was eventually reinstated by the US Navy and won fame and eventual promotion for his daring capture of the CSS *Florida*.

Raphael Semmes understandably had a different viewpoint. In fiction at least it seems Semmes's alter ego, Captain Nemo has come across this particular version of the *Florida* with all hands on board.

CHAPTER XIX

VANIKORO

These islands are coral producing. A slow but steady ascent, due to the work of the polyps, will one day join them all up. The new island will later attach itself to the neighbouring archipelagos, and a fifth continent will extend from New Zealand and New Caledonia all the way to the Marquesas.

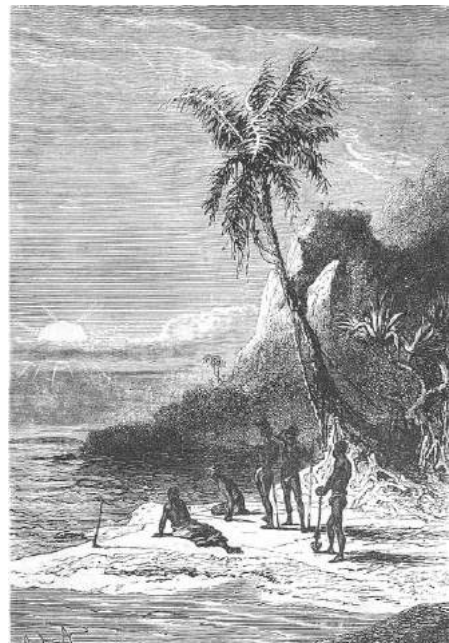
The day I expounded this theory to Captain Nemo, he coldly replied:

'It is not new continents that the earth needs, but new men!'

*The chances of navigation had brought the Nautilus near Reao, discovered in 1822 by Captain Bellinghausen of the Mirny, and one of the most curious of the group. I was thus able to study the system of **madrepores** which built up the islands in this ocean.*

While we worked our way along the shores of Reao at a distance of only a few cables, I admired the gigantic task completed by these microscopic workers. The walls were mainly the work of stony corals known as millepores, porites, astrea, and meandrines. These polyps develop particularly in the rough waters near the ocean surface, and consequently they start their foundations at the top, which then gradually sinks deeper together with the remains of the secretions. Such at least is the theory of Mr Darwin, who explains in this way the formation of atolls – a better theory, in my view, than that which says that the madrepores build on the summits of mountains or volcanoes submerged a few feet below sea-level.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p126



In the afternoon, we passed sufficiently near the island of Tortuga, to run over some of its coral banks. The sun was declining behind the yet visible mountains, and the sea breeze had died away to nearly a calm, leaving the bright, and sparkling waters, with a mirrored surface. We now entered upon a scene of transcendent beauty, but the beauty was that of the deep, and not of the surface landscape. The reader is familiar with the history of the coral insect, that patient little stone-mason of the deep, which, though scarcely visible through the microscope, lays the foundations of islands, and of continents. The little coralline sometimes commences its work, hundreds of fathoms down in the deep sea, and working patiently, and laboriously, day and night, night and day, week after week, month after month, year after year, and century after century, finally brings its structure to the surface.

When its tiny blocks of lime-stone, which it has secreted from the salts of the sea, have been piled so high, that the tides now cover the structure, and now leave it dry, the little toiler of the sea, having performed the functions prescribed to it by its Creator, dies, and is entombed in a mausoleum more proud than any that could be reared by human hands. The winds, and the clouds now take charge of the new island, or continent, and begin to prepare it for vegetation, and the habitation of man, and animals.

*We have “slowed” the engine the better to enjoy the beautiful sub-marine landscape; and look! we are passing over a miniature forest, instinct with life. There are beautifully branching trees of **madrepores**, whose prongs are from one to two feet in length, and sometimes curiously interlaced. Each one of the branches, as well as the trunk, has a number of little notches in it. These are the cells in which the little stone-mason is at work. Adhering to the branches of these miniature trees, like mosses, and lichens, you see sundry formations that you might mistake for leaves. These are also cellular, and are the workshops of the little masons. Scattered around, among the trees, are waving the most gorgeous of fans, and, what we might call sea-ferns, and palms. These are of a variety of brilliant colors, purple predominating.*

Lying on the smooth, white sand, are boulders of coral in a variety of shapes—some, like the domes of miniature cathedrals; some, perfectly spherical; some, cylindrical. These, and the trees, are mostly of a creamy white, though occasionally, pink, violet, and green are discovered. As the passage of the steamer gives motion to the otherwise smooth sea, the fans, ferns, and palms wave, gracefully, changing their tints as the light flashes upon them, through the pellucid waters. The beholder looks entranced, as though he were gazing upon a fairy scene, by moonlight; and to add to the illusion, there is a movement of life, all new to the eye, in every direction.

There is no navigation, perhaps, in the world, so trying to the vigilance and nerves of the mariner as that of the China seas. It is a coral sea, and filled with dangers in almost every direction, especially in its eastern portion, from the Philippine Islands down to the Strait of Sunda. The industrious little stone-mason, which we have before so often referred to, has laid the foundation of a new empire, at the bottom of the China Sea, and is fast making his way to the surface. He has already dotted the sea with ten thousand islands, in its eastern portion, and is silently and mysteriously piling up his tiny blocks of stone, one upon another, in the central and western portions. He is working very irregularly, having large gangs of hands employed here, and very few there, and is running up his structures in very fantastic shapes, some in solid blocks, with even surfaces, some as pyramids, and some as cones. The tops of the pyramids and cones are sometimes as sharp as needles, and pierce a ship's bottom as readily as a needle would a lady's finger. It is impossible to survey such a sea with accuracy. A surveying vessel might drop a lead on almost every square foot of bottom, and yet miss some of these mere needle-points. A ship, with the best of modern charts, may be threading this labyrinth, as she thinks, quite securely, and suddenly find herself impaled upon one of these dangers.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat* (1869) p171

Charles Darwin's theory of coral atoll formation is still an integral part of modern oceanography and marine geography. Darwin was a relative of the novelist Elizabeth Gaskell.

CHAPTER XX TORRES STRAITS

CHAPTER XXI A FEW DAYS ON LAND

CHAPTER XXII CAPTAIN NEMO'S LIGHTNING

"Captain!" I repeated touching him.

He shivered and turned round.

'Ah, it's you, doctor?' he said. 'Well how was your hunting? Did you gather any interesting plant specimens?'

'Yes, captain,' I replied. 'But unfortunately we also brought back a pack of bipeds, whose proximity worries me somewhat.'

'What sort of bipeds?'

'Savages'

'Savages!' replied Captain Nemo in a sarcastic tone. 'And you're surprised, Dr Arronax, that when you set foot on one of the lands of this globe, you find savages? Where are there not savages, and in any case, are those that you call savages any worse than the others.'

'But Captain ...'

'For my part, sir, I have encountered them everywhere.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p152



Nemo is an abolitionist and an anti-imperialist.

He fights against 'hierarchies' in questioning whether people should judge people from other lands.

Eventually he deters the natives by electrifying the hull of the Nautilus

'I do not want my visit to Gueboroar Island to cost the life of a single one of these unfortunates.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p158

These natives prowled near the Nautilus.

CHAPTER XXIII

"ÆGRI SOMNIA"

The Nautilus was floating in a phosphorescent stratum, which was becoming dazzling in this darkness. It was produced by myriads of glowing animaliculae, whose brightness increased as they slid over the metallic hull. I then noticed sparks in these luminous waters, as if produced by streams of molten lead in a fiery furnace or metallic bodies heated to red or white heat; as a result of the contrast certain radiant portions appeared as shadows in this burning environment, from which however, all shades should logically have been banished. For this was no longer the even illumination of our normal lighting! A highly unusual vigour and movement were present. This light felt as if alive.

For several hours the Nautilus floated in these brilliant waves, with our admiration increasing when we saw large marine animals playing there like salamanders. In the midst of that fire which did not burn, I saw swift elegant porpoises, the tireless clowns of the seas, as well as 3-metre sailfish, the intelligent forecasters of hurricanes, whose formidable swords sometimes struck the window of the salon. Small fishes also appeared, a variety of triggerfishes, jumping scombroids, wolf unicorns, and a hundred others, streaking the luminous atmosphere as they swam.

The dazzling sight was an enchantment. Perhaps some atmospheric condition was increasing the effect of the phenomenon? Perhaps some storm was raging on the surface of the waves? But at a few metres' depth the Nautilus did not feel its fury as it swayed peacefully in the midst of the tranquil waters.

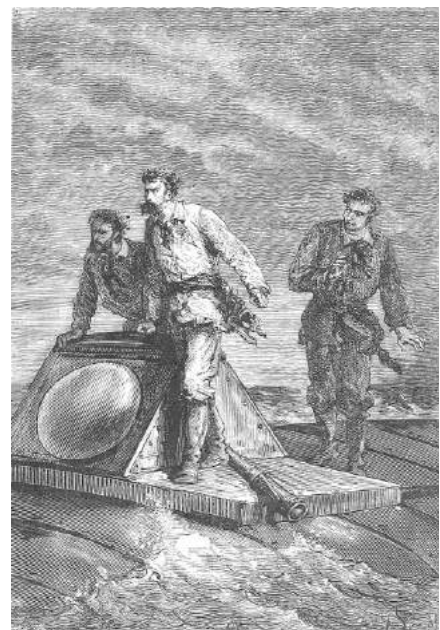
On deck Arronax, witnesses a different side to Captain Nemo.

I turned round. Captain Nemo was before me, but I could hardly recognise him. His face was transfigured. His eyes, burning with dark fire, stood out under his frowning eyebrows. His teeth were half bared.

His stiff body, his clenched fists, and his head hunched on his shoulders demonstrated the violent hatred filling his whole person. He did not move.

Had I inadvertently provoked this angry attitude? Did this bewildering character imagine that I had surprised some secret forbidden to the guests of the Nautilus?

His eye remained fixed upon the horizon.



No! I was not the object of the hatred, for he was not looking at me: his eyes remained implacably fixed on the invisible point of the horizon.

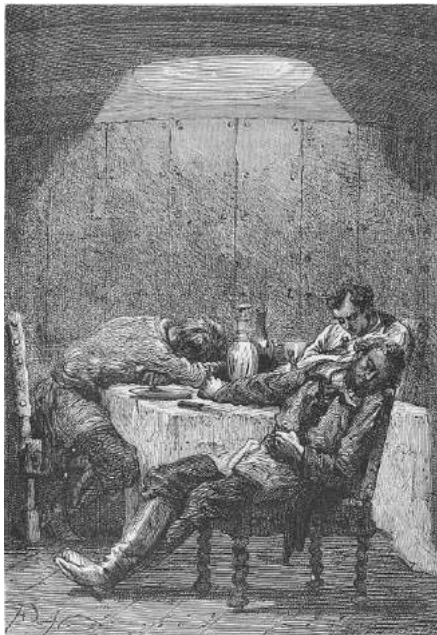
'Dr Arronax,' he said, in rather an imperious tone, 'I want you to observe one of the engagements which bind you to me.'

'Yes Captain?'

'You must allow your companions and yourself to be locked up, until such time as I consider it appropriate to give you back your liberty.'

Four crewmen were waiting at the door, and they led us to the cell where we had spent our first night on board the Nautilus.

Ned Land tried to protest, but the only reply was the door closing in his face.



Ned Land soon went to sleep, and Conseil also allowed himself to fall into a heavy slumber, which astonished me. I was wondering what had caused his imperious need for sleep, when I felt my own brain being permeated with a thick torpor. My eyes, which I tried to keep open, closed despite my best efforts I was prey to unhappy hallucinations.

Each of us leaned against one another

Sleeping tablets had clearly been added to the food we had eaten. Prison was not enough to hide Captain Nemo's activities from us, he also needed to employ sleep!

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p169

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CORAL KINGDOM

On 3rd August 1863 Raphael Semmes's second engineer, Simeon Cummings accidentally shot himself while on a hunting party at Saldana Bay, South Africa.

The pain felt by Raphael Semmes at a close friend's death will also become the pain of Captain Nemo.

A sad accident occurred to one of our young hunters before we left the bay. One afternoon, just at sunset, I was shocked to receive the intelligence that one of the cutters had returned alongside, with a dead officer in it. Third Assistant Engineer Cummings was the unfortunate officer. He had been hunting with a party of his messmates. They had all returned with well-filled game-bags to the boat, at sunset, and Cummings was in the act of stepping into her, when the cock of his gun striking against the gunwale, a whole load of buck-shot passed through his chest in the region of the heart, and he fell dead, in an instant, upon the sands. The body was lifted tenderly into the boat, and taken on board, and prepared by careful and affectionate hands for interment on the morrow. This young gentleman had been very popular, with both officers and crew, and his sudden death cast a gloom over the ship. All amusements were suspended, and men walked about with softened foot-fall, as though fearing to disturb the slumbers of the dead. Arrangements were made for interring him in the graveyard of a neighboring farmer, and the next morning, the colors of the ship were half-masted, and all the boats—each with its colors also at half-mast—formed in line, and as many of the officers and crew as could be spared from duty, followed the deceased to his last resting-place. There were six boats in the procession, and as they pulled in for the shore, with the well-known funeral stroke and drooping flags, the spectacle was one to sadden the heart. A young life had been suddenly cut short in a far distant land. A subscription was taken up to place a proper tomb over his remains, and the curious visitor to Saldanha Bay may read on a simple, but enduring marble slab, this mournful little episode in the history of the cruise of the Alabama.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p640

In his biography '*Two Years on the Alabama*' Arthur Sinclair, a crew member on the CSS *Alabama* would describe the reaction of Raphael Semmes.

Reaching the deck, the sad intelligence was conveyed through the officer of the watch to Semmes. The writer was invited to the cabin, and the story of the tragedy retold in all its details. Semmes was deeply moved, trembling with emotion, and brushing away a tear creeping slowly down his weather beaten cheek, he said 'that will do sir, good night.'

Arthur Sinclair *Two Years on the Alabama* (1896).

Captain Nemo took me to the stern of the Nautilus, and invited me to enter a cabin situated near the crew room.

On a bed lay a man about 40 years old with an energetic face, a typical Anglo Saxon.

I leaned over him. He was not only ill, but wounded. His head was swathed in blood-stained dressing and resting on two pillows. I removed the man's dressing: the wounded man, staring with large eyes, allowed me to without a single complaint.

Having seen the to the poor man's wounds, I reapplied the dressings to his head; and turned to Captain Nemo.

'How did he get this wound?'

'What difference does it make!' the captain replied evasively. Then: 'A shock from the Nautilus broke one of the levers of the engine, which struck this man. What is your diagnosis of his condition?'

I hesitated to give my view.

'You can speak freely,' said the captain. 'This man does not understand French.'

I looked at the wounded man one more time, and then said:

'This man will be dead within two hours.'

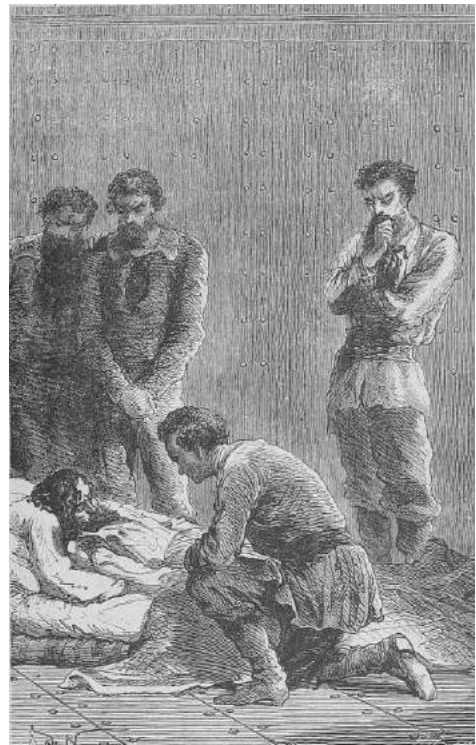
'Can nothing save him?'

'Nothing'

Captain Nemo's hand tightened, and a few tears slipped from his eyes, which I did not believe capable of weeping.

'You can retire now, Dr Arronax,' Captain Nemo said.

There on a bed, lay a man, with an energetic face.

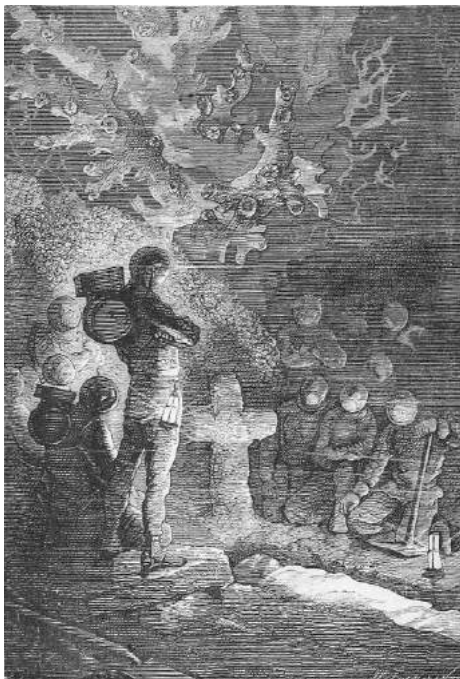


Nemo's crew member is afforded a burial beneath the sea in the grounds of the coral cemetery.

Meanwhile Captain Nemo had stopped. My companions and I interrupted our step, and when I turned round I saw that his men had formed a semi-circle around their leader. Looking closer, I noticed that four of them were carrying a long object on their shoulders.

We were now standing at the centre of a vast clearing, surrounded by the tall arborescences of the underwater forest. Our lamps projected a sort of dusky light over the space, inordinately lengthening the shadows on the ground. On the edge of the clearing, the darkness became immense, containing only the tiny sparks thrown out by the sharp edges of the coral.

Ned and Conseil were standing beside me. As we looked I understood that I was going to assist at a strange scene. When I examined the ground, I realised that it was swollen by slight extumescences encrusted with chalk deposits, laid out with a regularity that betrayed the hand of man.



In the middle of the clearing, on a pedestal of rocks roughly piled up, stood a coral cross, extending its long arms as if made of petrified blood.

On a sign from Captain Nemo, one of the men came forward, untied a pick from his belt, and began to dig a hole a few feet away from the cross.

Suddenly everything became clear! The clearing was a cemetery, the hole a grave, the long object the body of the man who had died during the night! Captain Nemo and his men had come to bury their companion in this shared resting place on the bottom of the inaccessible ocean!

All knelt in the attitude of prayer.

Meanwhile the grave was slowly being dug. From time to time the fish would flee their disturbed sanctuary. I could hear the iron pick resounding on the chalky ground, sometimes producing sparks when it hit some flint lost at the bottom of the waters. The hole got longer and wider, and soon it was deep enough to admit the body.

The bearers approached. The body, wrapped in a cloth of white byssus, was lowered into the watery grave. Captain Nemo, arms crossed on chest, and all the friends of that man who had loved them, knelt in an attitude of prayer. My companions and I had devoutly lowered our heads.

The grave was then covered with the fragments torn from the ground, forming a slight bulge.

When it was done, Captain Nemo and his men stood up. Approaching the grave, all knelt down again, and all stretched out their hands in a final farewell.

Then the funeral procession headed back to the Nautilus, passing once more under the arches of the forest in the midst of the woods, alongside the coral bushes, and continually climbing.

Finally the lights on board appeared. Their luminous trail guided us towards the Nautilus. At one o'clock we were back again.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p177

Simeon Cummings was re-interred with full military honours in the grounds at Elm Springs, Colombia, Tennessee on May 30th, 1994. Over 1,000 people attended the ceremony.

As soon as I had changed my clothes, I went back up on the platform, and in the grip of a terrible obsession of ideas, I went and sat down beside the searchlight'

Captain Nemo joined me. I got up and asked him:

'So this man died during the night as I foresaw?'

'Yes Dr Arronax.'

'And he is now resting beside his companions in that coral cemetery?'

'Yes, forgotten by all, but not by us! We have dug the grave and now the polyps have the task of sealing the dead in it for eternity!'

And in a sudden movement, hiding his face in clenched hands, the captain tried in vain to suppress a sob. Then he added:

'It's our cemetery there, peaceful, hundreds of feet below the surface of the waves.'

'At least your dead slumber tranquilly, captain, out of the reach of sharks.'

'Yes,' Captain Nemo replied gravely, 'sharks and men!'

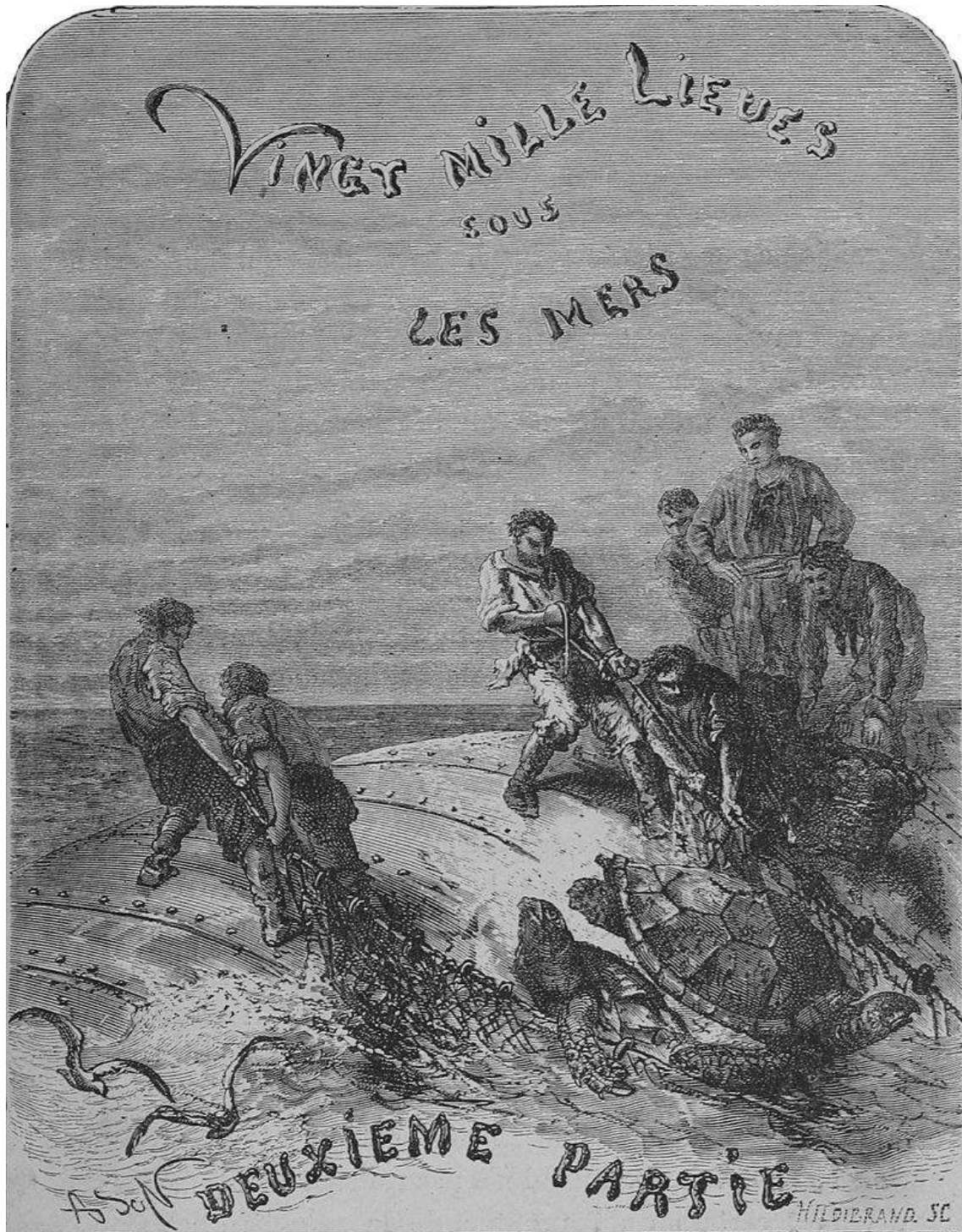
Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p177.

When its tiny blocks of lime-stone, which it has secreted from the salts of the sea, have been piled so high, that the tides now cover the structure, and now leave it dry, the little toiler of the sea, having performed the functions prescribed to it by its Creator, dies, and is entombed in a mausoleum more proud than any that could be reared by human hands.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p171

END OF PART ONE

Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea – Part Two.



CHAPTER I

THE INDIAN OCEAN

*Here begins the second part of this voyage under the seas. The first ended with that moving scene in the coral cemetery, which left such a deep impression on me. So was Captain Nemo's life spent completely in the bosom of the immense sea, where everything, even his tomb, was laid ready in its remotest chasms? There, not a single creature would come to trouble the final sleep of the inhabitants of the Nautilus, **friends welded to each other in death as they were in life!** 'Not a single man, either!' the captain had added.*

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p178

*'Individually and collectively Jack has taken soundings of the 'old man' and knows pretty well how to steer and where an anchor will hold. The men feel no restraint from his presence – they rather enjoy it. **In their way they love him and are proud of him, and he returns the sentiments, in his own way.***

***Two Years on the Alabama* Arthur Sinclair (1895).**

*For my part, I was no longer content with the hypothesis that satisfied Conseil. The worthy fellow persisted in seeing in the captain of the Nautilus merely one of those unrecognised scientists, who return humanity's indifference with mistrust. For him he was still a misunderstood genius, tired of the disappointments of the earth, who had to take sanctuary in that inaccessible environment where he could freely exercise his abilities. **But in my view this theory explained only one of Captain Nemo's sides.***



As a metaphor for America fighting with America itself for the abolition of slavery, Captain Nemo has many 'sides' including the seven souls yet to appear in our adventure.

The Seven Remaining Souls of Captain Nemo.

*We were ploughing the waves of the Indian Ocean, a vast liquid plain covering 550 million hectares, with waters so transparent that anyone looking down from the surface feels dizzy. The Nautilus was generally sailing at between 100 and 200 metres' depth. This carried on for a few days. **To anyone else but me, with my immense love for the sea, the hours would undoubtedly have seemed long and monotonous,** but my whole time was filled by daily excursions to the platform, where I got new strength from the invigorating ocean air, viewing the rich waters through the salon's windows, reading books in the library, and writing my memoirs; and so did not leave a moment for tiredness or boredom.*

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p180

*...the Alabama was well launched on the Indian Ocean, she had run the Cape of Good Hope out of sight, and was still hieing off before the gale, although this had moderated considerably as she had run off the coast. **We were now about to make a long voyage, tedious to the unphilosophical mariner, but full of interest to one who has an eye open to the wonders and beauties of nature.***

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p674

*On 25th January the ocean was totally deserted, and the Nautilus spent the day on the surface, beating the waters with its powerful screw and making them spurt up to a great height. In these conditions, how could it not have been mistaken for a gigantic cetacean? I spent three quarters of the day on the platform. I gazed at the sea. Nothing in view except, westerly at about 4 p.m., a long steamer, heading on the opposite tack. Its masts were visible for a while, but it could not sight the Nautilus, too flat and low in the water. **I decided that the steamer had to belong to the Peninsula and Oriental Line.***

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p184

*Our coaling had occupied us but ten hours, - **so admirable are the arrangements of the P and O Steamship company, at whose wharf we had coaled.***

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p

P and O Headquarters, Hong Kong (c1851).



There is one charming animal whose encounter is a promise of good luck, according the ancients. Aristotle, Arthenaeus, Pliny, and Oppian studied its habits and exhausted the entire poetics of the scholars of Greece and Italy on it. They called it Nautilus or Pompilius. But modern science has not endorsed their terminology, and the mollusc is now known as the argonaut.

It was a school of these argonauts that was travelling over the surface of the ocean. We could count several hundred of them. They belonged to the species of tuberculous argonauts, unique to the seas around India.

The gracious molluscs were using their locomotive tubes to move backwards by expelling through their tubes the water they had taken in. Of their eight tentacles, six were long and thin and floating on the water, and two were rounded into palmate shapes raised for the wind like light sails. I could see their spiral wavy shell perfectly, accurately compared by Cuvier to an elegant launch. A true vessel in fact. It transports the animal which has secreted it but isn't attached to it.

'Although the argonaut is free to leave its shell,' I said to Conseil, 'it never does'.

'Just like Captain Nemo,' he judiciously replied. 'Which is why he should have called this ship the Argonaut.'



For another hour the Nautilus floated in the midst of this school of molluscs. Then some mysterious fright suddenly took hold of them. As if on signal, all the sails were abruptly brought down, the arms retracted, the bodies contracted; the shells changed their centre of gravity and turned over, and the whole fleet disappeared under the waves. It happened instantaneously, and never did ships of a squadron maneuver with more precision.

Night fell abruptly at this moment, as, hardly lifted by the breeze the waves stretched peacefully out under the wales of the Nautilus.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p185

The next day, it became perfectly calm, and so continued all day. We were in twenty-three fathoms of water, and could see by the lead line that we were drifting over the bottom at the rate of about two knots an hour. We got out our fishing-lines, and caught some deep sea-fish, of the grouper species. The sea was alive with the nautilus, and the curious sea-nettle, with its warps and hawsers thrown out, and its semi-transparent, gelatinous disc contracting and expanding, as the little animal extracted its food from the water.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat* (1869) p194

At seven in the evening, the half-submerged Nautilus was sailing through a sea of milk. As far as the eye could see, the ocean looked as if it had been changed to milk. Was it the effect of the Moon's rays? Hardly since the moon was scarcely two days old and still hidden below the horizon.

Conseil could hardly believe his eyes, and asked me the reasons for this remarkable phenomenon. Fortunately, I was in a position to reply.

'But', asked Conseil, could Monsieur inform me what produces such an effect, for I do not imagine that the water has actually changed to milk.

'No, my good fellow, this whiteness which surprises you is due merely to the presence of myriads of tiny infusoria creatures, types of tiny glow worms of a gelatinous translucent appearance, the thickness of a hair, whose length is not greater than a fifth of a millimetre. Some of these creatures join together over a distance of several leagues.'

As for me, I continued to observe the phenomenon. For several hours, the Nautilus's prow cut the whitish waves, and I noticed that it floated soundlessly over the silky water, as if sliding over those foamy areas sometimes produced in bays by the collision of currents and counter currents.

At about midnight the sea suddenly resumed its normal colour, but behind us, as far as the eye could see, the sky reflected the whiteness of the waves for a long time as if filled with the dim gleams of an aurora borealis.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p186

On the 29th of January, we observed in latitude 2° 43' north, and longitude 51° east; and on the following evening passed through a remarkable patch of the sea. At about eight P. M., there being no moon, but the sky being clear, and the stars shining brightly, we suddenly passed from the deep blue water in which we had been sailing, into a patch of water so white that it startled me; so much did it appear like a shoal. To look over the ship's side, one would have sworn that she was in no more than five or six fathoms of water. The officer of the deck became evidently alarmed, and reported the fact to me, though I myself had observed it. There was no shoal laid down, within several hundred miles of our position, on the chart, and yet here was so manifestly one, that I shortened sail—we were running seven or eight knots per hour at the time, with a fresh breeze—hove the ship to, and got a cast of the deep-sea lead. The line ran out, and out, until a hundred fathoms had been taken by the lead, and still we found no bottom. We now checked the line, and hauling in the lead, made sail again. My fears thus quieted, I observed the phenomenon more at leisure. The patch was extensive. We were several hours in running through it. Around the horizon there was a subdued glare, or flush, as though there were a distant illumination going on, whilst overhead there was a lurid, dark sky, in which the stars paled. The whole face of nature seemed changed, and with but little stretch of the imagination, the Alabama might have been conceived to be a phantom ship, lighted up by the sickly and unearthly glare of a phantom sea, and gliding on under the pale stars one knew not whither.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p732

CHAPTER II
A NEW SUGGESTION BY CAPTAIN NEMO.

CHAPTER III
A PEARL WORTH TEN MILLIONS

CHAPTER IV
THE RED SEA

On 9 February the Nautilus was floating in the broadest part of the Red Sea between Suakin on the west coast and Al Qunfudhah on the east, where it is 190 miles wide.

*At noon that day, once our position had been taken, Captain Nemo came up on the platform after me. I promised myself not to let him go down again without at least sounding him out on his plans for the future. **He came up as soon as he spotted me, graciously offered me a cigar, and said:***

‘Well monsieur, does the Red Sea please you? Have you seen enough of the marvels it holds, its fishes and zoophytes, its beds of sponges and its forests of corals? Have you seen the towns dotted along its shores?’

‘Yes, Captain and the Nautilus lent itself marvelously to all this study. Ah, what an intelligent boat it is!’

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p212

It was my custom, on these occasions, to go forward on the bridge—a light structure spanning the deck, near amidships—which, in the twilight hours, was a sort of lounging-place for the officers, and smoke my single cigar, and listen to whatever might be going on, almost as much amused as the sailors themselves. So rigid is the discipline of a ship of war, that the captain is necessarily much isolated from his officers. He messes alone, walks the quarter-deck alone, and rarely, during the hours of duty, exchanges, even with his first lieutenant, or officer of the deck, other conversation than such as relates to the ship, or the service she is upon.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p454

'It is easy to see that these historians never sailed on the Nautilus.'

'Indeed,' the captain relied smiling, 'but in this respect, the moderns are little further advanced than the ancients. Many centuries were needed to discover the mechanical power of steam! Who knows if a second Nautilus will appear in the next 100 years! Progress is slow Dr Arronax.'

'Agreed,' I replied; 'your ship is a century ahead of its time, or perhaps several. What a shame that such a secret must die with its inventor.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p212

In January 1954 the United States Navy launched the USS *Nautilus* - the world's first nuclear powered submarine.

The name *Nautilus* is thought to have been chosen as a homage to the Walt Disney film *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* which was released in the same year.

This is given more credence when one considers The USS *Nautilus*' ship's badge was designed by The Walt Disney Company.



The USS *Nautilus*

The 1954 Walt Disney film of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* gives Captain Nemo's Birkenhead built *Nautilus* a nuclear-powered engine.

In 1958 the USS *Nautilus* completed the first voyage beneath the North Pole and the Arctic Ice Cap. The voyage recreated the equivalent fictional journey beneath the Antarctic Ice Cap undertaken by Captain Nemo's *Nautilus* in Jules Verne's novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*.

The USS *Nautilus* is a classic example of the United States fulfilling the prophecies of both Jules Verne and Abraham Lincoln.

Anything one man can imagine, other men can make real.

Jules Verne

The best way to predict the future is to create it.

Abraham Lincoln

The USS *Nautilus* was decommissioned in 1980 and made a National Historic Monument in 1982. The submarine has been preserved as a museum ship at Groton, Connecticut.

'What no longer poses a problem for a modern ship, well rigged, solidly constructed, in control of its direction thanks to obedient steam, offered all sorts of dangers to the vessels of the ancients.

But in our time, the steamers plying between Suez and the South Seas no longer have anything to fear from the dangers of this gulf.

'Admittedly,' I said, 'and steam seems to have killed the skill of observation in sailors.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p213

*This was the first time that we were to make use of our sails, unaided by steam, and the old sailors of the ship, who had not bestridden a yard for some months, leaped aloft, with a will, to obey the welcome order. The race of sailors has not yet entirely died out, though the steamship is fast making sad havoc with it. There is the same difference between the old-time sailor, who has been bred in the sailing-ship, and the modern sailor of the steamship, that there is between the well-trained fox-hound, who chases Reynard all day, and the cur that dodges a rabbit about, for half an hour or so. **The sailing-ship has a romance, and a poetry about her, which is thoroughly killed by steam...***

...But steam, practical, commonplace, hard-working steam, has well-nigh changed all this, and cut away the webbing from the foot of the old-time sailor. Seamanship, evolutions, invention, skill, and ready resource in times of difficulty, and danger, have nearly all gone out of fashion, and instead of reefing the topsails, and club-hauling, and box-hauling the ship, some order is now sent to the engineer, about regulating his fires, and paying attention to his steam-gauges. Alas! alas!

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p149



CHAPTER V

THE ARABIAN TUNNEL

CHAPTER VI

THE GREEK ISLANDS



Having said that, Captain Nemo walked up to a cabinet placed near the port side of the salon. Near it I saw a trunk reinforced with iron bands; it had a copper plate bearing on it the monogram of the Nautilus and its motto Mobilis in Mobile.

Without worrying about my presence, the captain opened the cabinet, a kind of safe containing a large number of bars.

They were gold bars. Where had this precious metal come from, representing as it did an enormous sum of money?

Where did the captain get his gold, and what did he plan to do with it?

I did not say a word, but simply stared. Captain Nemo took the bars one by one and methodically arranged them in a trunk which he filled up entirely. I estimated that it contained more than 1,000 kilograms of gold, that is nearly five million francs' worth.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p232

As I spoke of good pay, and payment in gold... I would give them, I said, about double the ordinary wages.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p412

..... On the subject of the Sea Bride we may mention that our strong box was liberally filled with sovereigns at this visit, the proceedings of the wool sale in England, part cargo of the Tuscaloosa, transferred at Angra Pequena some months since. The Alabama is now as wealthy as a bold buccaneer.

Arthur Sinclair *Memoirs of Two Years on the Alabama* (1895)

CHAPTER VII

THE MEDITERRANEAN IN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS

CHAPTER VIII

VIGO BAY

Having left the Strait of Gibraltar, the Nautilus made for the open sea. As it had surfaced we could once again enjoy our daily promenade on the platform.

*As for Captain Nemo, I wondered what he might think of our escape, what anxiety, what anguish it might cause him, and what he would do if our plans got out or if we did not succeed! Doubtless I had no reason to complain. **Indeed, never had hospitality been more open than his.***

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p244

Raphael Semmes generally treated his prisoners well, they often including families with young children, who would be transferred to another ship or landed in the nearest port.

My ménage began now to assume quite a domestic air. I had previously captured another interesting prisoner, who was still on board—not having been released on parole. This prisoner was a charming little canary-bird, which had been brought on board from a whaler, in its neat gilded cage. Bartelli had the wonderful art, too, of supplying me with flowers—brought from the shore when this was practicable, and when not practicable, raised in his own tiny pots.

When I would turn over in my cot, in the morning, for another nap, in that dim consciousness which precedes awakening, I would listen, in dreamy mood, to the sweet notes of the canary, the pattering of the tiny feet of the children and their gleeful voices over my head; inhaling, the while, the scent of the geranium, or the jessamine, and forget all about war's alarms.

"Home, Sweet Home," with all its charms, would cluster around my imagination, and as my slumber deepened, putting reason to rest, and giving free wing to fancy, I would be clasping again the long-absent dear ones to my heart. Bartelli's shake of my cot, and his announcement that it was "seven bells"—half-past seven, which was my hour for rising—would often be a rude dispeller of such fancies, whilst the Fairchilds were on board.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p497

The Nautilus enters Vigo Bay – the source of Nemo's great wealth.



I wanted to consult the compass. I wanted to see whether or not the Nautilus was really taking us towards the coast. The Nautilus was still in Portuguese waters. It was heading northwards following the coastline.

The vibrations of the propeller decreased noticeably, and then stopped altogether. Why the change in the Nautilus's speed? Whether this halt helped or hindered Ned Land's plans, I could not say.

At this point, the door of the main salon opened, and Captain Nemo appeared.

'Well, Dr Arronax, we are in Vigo Bay, and you are now in a position to penetrate its mysteries.'

The captain got up and asked me to follow him. I had had time to recover and did as he requested. The salon was dark, but the water sparkled through the clear windows. I looked.



Around the Nautilus, for a distance of half a mile, the waters appeared impregnated with electric light. The sandy bottom was clear and clean. Some of the crewmen in diving suits were busy salvaging half-rotten barrels and torn-open trunks in the midst of still-blackened wrecks.

From these trunks and barrels escaped gold and silver bars and cascades of pieces-of-eight and jewelry. The sand was strewn with them. Then, laden with their precious booty, the men were coming back to the Nautilus, depositing their burdens, and going back to continue their inexhaustible harvest of gold and silver.

From these crates escaped ingots.

I understood. This was the scene of the battle of 22 October 1702. On this very spot the galleons loaded for the Spanish government had sunk. Captain Nemo came here whenever he needed to take charge of the millions which he ballasted his Nautilus with. It was for him, and him alone, that America had given up its precious metals. He was the direct and only inheritor of the treasures taken from the Incas and others defeated by Hernando Cortez!

'Did you know, monsieur,' he asked, smiling, 'that the sea contained so many riches?'

'Do you understand now why I am a multi-millionaire?'

CHAPTER VIII

A VANISHED CONTINENT

The following morning, 19 February, the Canadian came into my room. I was expecting his visit. He seemed very disappointed.

Well monsieur? He said to me.

'Well Ned, luck was against us yesterday.'

'Yes, that damned captain had to stop at the exact moment we were going to escape from his boat!'

'Yes Ned, he was dealing with his banker.'

'His banker!'

'Or rather his bank. By which I mean this ocean where his riches are safer than they would be in the storerooms of a state.'

At about eleven in the evening I received a very unexpected visit from Captain Nemo. With a great deal of grace, he asked me if I felt tired from staying up the night before. I replied in the negative.

'Then, Dr Aronnax, may I suggest a curious excursion?'

'Pray continue captain.'

'You have still visited the submarine depths only in the daytime and in sunlight. Might it interest you to visit them on a dark night?'

'Yes indeed.'

*'The excursion will be tiring, I warn you. **We will need to march for a long time and climb a mountain. And the paths are not very well looked after.**'*

'What you say only increases my curiosity. I am ready when you are.'

'Please come, monsieur; we will put on our diving suits.'

When I got to the changing room, I saw that neither my companions nor any of the crewmen were going to accompany us on our excursion. Captain Nemo had not even mentioned the possibility of taking Ned or Conseil.

A few minutes later, after the usual procedure, we were walking at a depth of 300 metres on the floor of the Atlantic.

*It was nearly twelve. **The waters were very dark, but Captain Nemo pointed out a distant reddish point like a protracted gleam, glowing about two miles from the Nautilus.** What this fire was, what materials fed it, how and why it was maintained in the liquid element, I could not have said. In any case it lit our path, albeit dimly.*

Captain Nemo and I walked close together, heading directly for the light he had indicated. The smooth ground climbed imperceptibly. We were taking long strides, helping ourselves along with our sticks; but progress was slow, for our feet sank down into the mud mixed with seaweed and dotted with flat stones.

*While walking, I heard a sort of sizzling sound above my head. **The noise sometimes got much louder and became a continuous crackling. I soon understood the reason. It was rain, pattering violently down on the surface of the water.** Instinctively the thought came to me that I was going to get wet! Being rained on underwater: I couldn't help laughing at the strange idea! But to tell the truth, in the thick clothing of the diving suit, **I no longer had any sensation of being underwater, and only felt as if I was in an atmosphere slightly denser than on land.***

I caught glimpses of piles of stones, sometimes covered by millions of zoophytes and thickets of seaweed. Turning round, I could see the whitish searchlight of the Nautilus beginning to grow paler in the distance.

The stone piles I have just mentioned were laid out on the ocean floor with a certain regularity that I could not explain.

I noted gigantic furrows vanishing into the distant darkness and could not begin to guess how long they were.

*Other peculiarities also appeared which I could not understand. **It seemed to me that my lead soles were heavily crushing a bed of bones which cracked with dry sounds.** What was this vast plain that I was crossing?*

*Meanwhile the reddish glow which had been guiding us grew and soon inflamed the whole horizon. **The existence underwater of this light intrigued me tremendously. Was I witnessing some outflow of electricity? Was I heading for some natural phenomenon that was still unknown to scientists on land? Or even – for the thought did cross my mind – did man perhaps have a part in this blaze? Was some hand fanning the fire?***

***Would I meet companions or friends of Captain Nemo in these deep strata,** living as strange an existence as him, and to whom he was paying a visit?*

***Would I find a whole colony of exiles** weary of the miseries of earth, who had sought independence on the bottom of the ocean – and found it?*

I would not have been surprised to encounter one of those cities in the sea that Captain Nemo had dreamed of!

*Our path grew brighter and brighter. **A whitening glow radiated out from the summit of the mountain of about 800 feet. But it was only a secondary image produced in the prism of***

those strata of water. The source of this inexplicable light, the focus, was located on the far side of the mountain.

Captain Nemo moved forward without hesitation through the stony mazes furrowing the bed of the Atlantic. He knew this dark route. Doubtless he had often walked it, and could not get lost. I followed him with perfect confidence.

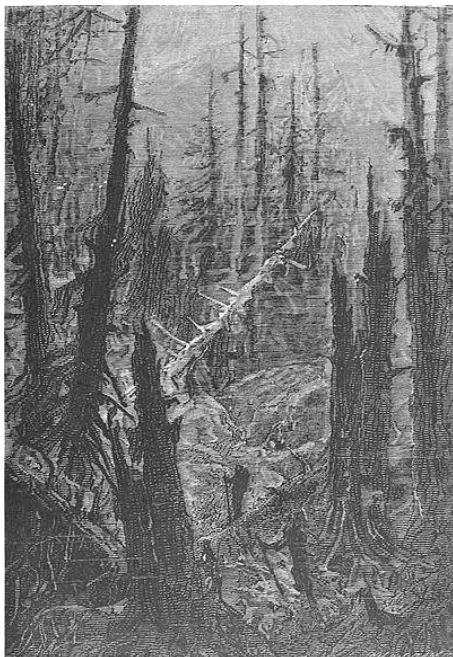
It was now one o'clock in the morning. We had arrived at the first slopes of the mountain. But to start climbing them, we had to venture on to difficult paths leading through a huge thicket.

Yes a thicket of dead trees, without leaves and without sap, trees mineralised by the water, dominated here and there by gigantic pines. It was like a seam of coal still standing, holding on to the sunken soil with its roots.

I went on climbing rocks, stepping over fallen trunks, breaking the sea creepers which swung from one tree to another, frightening away the fishes which flew from branch to branch.

Huge clearings looked as though they had been made by man's hand, and I wondered if some submarine inhabitant was not suddenly going to appear.

Two hours after leaving the Nautilus we crossed the tree line, the mountain peak towered a hundred feet above our heads, its dazzling radiation projecting a shadow on to the slope below. A few petrified shrubs ran here and there in grimacing zigzags. Fish rose as one before our feet like birds surprised in tall grass.



We had arrived at a first plateau, where further surprises awaited me. Here picturesque ruins stood up, bearing the mark of man's hand and not that of the Creator. They were vast accumulations, massed piles of stones where one could make out the vague forms of castles and temples, covered with a world of flowering zoophytes and over which, instead of ivy, seaweed and algae formed a thick vegetable cloak.

The illustration once again suggests that Jules Verne is using an open-air stage to inspire his writing style.

A dead tree thicket.

But what was this land sunk by cataclysms? Who had laid out these rocks and stones like the dolmens of prehistoric times? Where was I - what place had Captain Nemo chosen to bring me to?

*I would have liked to ask him. Not able to, I stopped him. I seized hold of his arm. **But he shook his head and pointed to the last summit of the mountain, seeming to say to me:***

‘Come! Further! Come with me!’

I followed him in a last surge, and a few minutes later had reached the summit, about ten metres higher than the rest of the rocky mass.

*I looked in the direction we had just come from. The mountain rose only about seven or eight hundred feet above the plain; but on the other side there was twice this drop to the bottom of the Atlantic. **My eyes wandered into the distance, covering a vast space dazzlingly lit by the burning light. The mountain was a volcano. Fifty feet below the peak, in a rain of stones and volcanic slag, a large crater was vomiting torrents of lava, which spread out like a cascade of fire through the water. Like an enormous torch, the volcano lit up the plain below to the farthest points of the horizon.***

Right there in front of my eyes – ruined, broken, collapsed – appeared a city destroyed, its roofs fallen, its temples flattened, its arches broken, its columns lying on the ground, but with the solid proportions of a type of Tuscan architecture still discernible. Further on lay a few remains of a gigantic aqueduct; here, the silted bulge of an acropolis, with the floating forms of a Parthenon; there a few traces of a quayside, as if some antique port had once sheltered the merchant vessels and war triremes on the shores of a long lost ocean; further still, the long lines of broken-down walls and broad deserted streets: a whole Pompeii sunk beneath the waters, that Captain Nemo was bringing back to life before my very eyes!

There before my eyes, appeared a destroyed city.



Where was I? Where? I wanted to know at any cost, I wanted to speak, I wanted to tear off the copper sphere imprisoning my head.

But Captain Nemo came close to me and stopped me with a sign. Then picking up a chalky piece of stone, he went up to a rock of basalt and wrote a single word:

ATLANTIS

What a flash crossed my mind! Atlantis, that ancient Meropis of Theopompus, the Atlantis of Plato, the continent denied by Origen, Porphyry, Iamblichus, d'Anville, Maltre-Brun, and Humboldt, who all classified its disappearance as a legendary tale, but accepted by Posidonius, Pliny, Ammianus Marcellinus, Tertullian, Engel, Sherer, Tournefort, Buffon, and d'Avezac: it was there before my eyes, still bearing the irrefutable signs of the catastrophe that struck it! So this was the sunken region that had existed outside Europe, Asia and Libya and beyond the Pillars of Hercules, the land of the powerful Atlanteans against whom ancient Greece had fought its first wars!

The historian who recorded the main events of those heroic times was Plato himself. His dialogue of Timaeus and Critas was, so to speak, dictated under the inspiration of Solon, poet and legislator.

One day, Solon was talking with a few wise old men from Sais, a town already 800 years old, as shown by the annals engraved on the sacred walls of its temples. One of these old men recounted the story of another town 1,000 years more ancient.

This first Athenian city, 900 centuries old, had been invaded, and partly destroyed by the Atlanteans. The Atlanteans, he said, occupied an immense continent greater than Africa and Asia combined and covering an area between the twelfth degree and the fortieth degree north. Their domination stretched as far as Egypt. They wished to extend it even to Greece, but had to retreat before the indomitable resistance of the Hellenes. The centuries went by. A cataclysm struck in the shape of floods and earthquakes. A night and a day were sufficient to destroy Atlantis, whose highest summits still emerge at Madeira, the Azores, the Canary Islands, and the Cape Verde Islands.

These were historic moments that Captain Nemo's inscription brought to life in my mind. Led by the strangest of destinies, I was trampling one of the mountains of that continent, my hands were touching ruins hundreds of years old, contemporary with the early geological periods! I was walking on the same spot where the coevals of the first man had walked! I was crushing under my heavy soles skeletons of animals from those fabulous times, which the now mineralized trees used to cover with their shade!

Oh! Why did I not have enough time? I longed to climb down the steep slopes of this mountain, cover every point of this immense continent which has doubtless connected Africa and America, and visit the great cities from before the Flood. There in front of my eyes perhaps stretched Machimos the warlike and Eusebia the holy, whose gigantic inhabitants

lived entire centuries and were strong enough to pile up these blocks which still resisted the movements of the water.

One day perhaps, some eruptive phenomenon would bring these sunken ruins back up to the surface of the ocean! Submarine volcanoes have often been recorded in this portion of the ocean, and ships have frequently felt extraordinary earthquakes while passing over the tormented deeps.

Some vessels have registered dull sounds signalling turmoil between the elements in the deep; others have gathered volcanic cylinders sent up from the sea. All this ground, as far as the equator, is still worked by plutonic forces. And who knows if in some far-off period, the summits of fire-breathing mountains will not one day be built up by the volcanic ejecta and successive strata of lava, and appear at the surface of the Atlantic!

While I was dreaming this way, wanting to engrave in my memory all of the details of this grandiose landscape, Captain Nemo, leaning on a mossy stele, remained motionless as if turned to stone in a silent ecstasy. Was he dreaming of the lost generations, was he asking them the secret of human destiny? Was it here that this strange being came to commune with history, to relive ancient life – he who wanted nothing to do with modern times? What I would have given then to know his thoughts, to share them, to understand them!

We remained at this place for an entire hour, contemplating the vast plain in the bright light from the lava which sometimes took on a surprising intensity. At times the interior boiling sent quick shivers through the crust of the mountain. Deep sounds, transmitted clearly in the liquid environment, reverberated with majestic amplitude.

The moon suddenly appeared for a moment through the mass of waters, sending a few pale rays down to the sunken continent. It was only a gleam, but produced an indescribable effect. The captain got up, looked on the huge plain one last time, then signalled me to follow him.

We quickly descended the mountain. Once past the mineral forest, I saw the Nautilus's searchlight shining like a star. The captain marched straight ahead; and we were back on board by the time the first tints of dawn came and whitened the surface of the ocean.

CHAPTER X THE SUBMARINE COAL-MINES

I headed up to the hatch. It was open. But instead of the daylight, I found myself in total darkness. Where are we? Had I made a mistake? Was it still night? No! not a star shone, and the night is never such absolute darkness.

I did not know what to think, when a voice said:

'Is that you, Dr Arronax?'

'Ah! Captain Nemo, I replied; where are we?'

'Wait a moment. Our searchlight is going to be switched on, and if you like clear situations, you'll be pleased.'

For a moment my eyes were blinded by the dazzling electric jet, but then I looked again. The Nautilus was stationary. It was floating beside a shore converted to a quayside. The sea bearing it formed a lake imprisoned in a circus of walls measuring two miles in diameter, or about six miles round. The water level – as indicated by the pressure-gauge – had to be the same as the external level, for there necessarily existed some means of communication between the lake and the ocean. The high walls were inclined at their bases, and converged to form a vault like an immense upside down funnel five or six hundred metres high. At the summit was a circular orifice where I detected the pale gleam, evidently coming from the sun.

Before examining the internal shape of the enormous cavern more attentively, and before deciding if it was the work of nature or man, I went straight up to Captain Nemo.

Where are we? I said.

***In the centre of an extinct volcano,** a volcano invaded by the sea following some convulsion of the earth.*



While you were sleeping the Nautilus entered this lagoon via a natural channel ten metres below the surface of the ocean. This is its home port, its safe haven: convenient, secret, and sheltered from the wind in every direction! Find me a harbour on the coasts of your landmasses or islands which is worth this refuge, guaranteed to be safe from the fury of hurricanes!

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p266

The Nautilus was floating near a bank.

The island of Fernando de Noronha is evidently of volcanic origin. Its whole appearance indicates that it was thrown from the depths of the sea, by nature, when in one of her most fearful paroxysms.



The Location of Fernando de Noronha.



Its abrupt and rugged sides of solid rock, rent and torn, and blackened by the torrents, rise almost perpendicularly from the waters to the height of several hundred feet.

The famous peak before spoken of, and which the mariner at sea descries long before the body of the island becomes visible, is a queer freak of nature. It looks as though the giants had been playing at church-steeple, and had upraised this immense shaft of granite to mark one of nature's cathedrals. The illusion is almost perfect.

Fernando de Noronha.

When "land ho!" is first cried by the look-out at the mast-head, and the glass is applied in the given direction, the observer is startled at the resemblance. Nor is his surprise diminished, as his ship approaches nearer, and the body of the island begins to make its appearance above the water; for there is the roof of the massive cathedral, to which the steeple belongs! The peak is a mass of solid granite, shot by the earthquake through the solid crust of the mountain, and is almost symmetrical enough to have been shaped by human hands. We lay nearly two weeks at Fernando de Noronha, and I was never tired of gazing upon this wonderful evidence of the power of volcanic forces...

... We lay nearly two weeks at Fernando de Noronha, and I was never tired of gazing upon this wonderful evidence of the power of volcanic forces.

The anchorage being nothing more than an open roadstead, we soon found it too rough to permit a ship to lie alongside us and so were obliged to haul the Hatch off to her anchors, and continue our coaling with boats.

I can see, captain, that nature serves you everywhere and on all occasions. You are in safety on this lake, and nobody but you can visit its waters. But what is the point of this refuge? The Nautilus does not need a port.'

*'No, doctor, but it does need electricity to move, batteries to produce its electricity, sodium to feed its batteries, coal to make its sodium, and mines to furnish its coal. **And just here, the sea covers entire forests swallowed up in earlier geological times: now mineralized and turned into coal, this seam I own is inexhaustible.***

'So your men work as miners, captain?'

'Precisely. The mine extends under the waves like those of Newcastle. Dressed in their frogmen's suits, pick and pickaxe in hand, my men go down here to extract coal, with the result that I do not require any from the mines on land. When I burn it to manufacture sodium, the smoke escaping from the crater gives the appearance of an active volcano.'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p267



Fernando de Noronha.



**Harper Goff's Artist Impression of
'Vulcania' for Walt Disney.**



***Vulcania* in Walt Disney's 1954 film of *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*.**

CHAPTER XI

THE SARGASSO SEA

That day, the Nautilus crossed a remarkable region of the Atlantic Ocean. Everyone is aware of the existence of that great current of warm water known as the Gulf Stream. After leaving the Florida Strait, it heads towards Spitsbergen . But before reaching the Gulf of Mexico at about 44 degrees north, this current divides into two. The larger branch heads for the coasts of Ireland and Norway, whilst the second heads south starting from a point opposite the Azores; then striking the African coast and describing an extended oval, it heads back towards the West Indies once more.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p272

The stream into which we have now passed is, literally, an immense salt-water river in the sea. Coming out of the Gulf of Mexico, it has brought the temperature of the tropics, all the way to the Banks of Newfoundland, in the latitude of 50° north, and it has run this distance between banks, or walls of cold water, on either side, parting with very little of its warmth, by the way. ...

..... The furnace is the torrid zone; the Mexican Gulf and Caribbean Sea are the caldrons; the Gulf Stream is the conducting-pipe. From the Grand Banks of New Foundland to the shores of Europe is the basement—the hot-air chambers—in which this pipe is flared out so as to present a large cooling surface. Here the circulation of the atmosphere is arranged by nature, and it is such that the warmth conveyed into this warm-air chamber of mid-ocean is taken up by the genial west winds, and dispensed in the most benign manner, throughout Great Britain and the west of Europe.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p

*The name Sargasso comes from the Spanish sargazo meaning 'sea wrack'. This sea-wrack, floating varec, or gulfweed, is the main constituent of the immense bed. According to the scientist Maury, author of *The Physical Geography of the Sea*, such hydrophytes gather in this peaceful basin of the Atlantic.*

I share Maury's opinion, and have been able to study the phenomenon in that special environment where ships rarely enter.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p274

I refer my readers, curious in this matter, to the work of Captain Maury, entitled the "Physical Geography of the Sea." It is full of profound philosophy, on the subjects of which it treats, and is written in so pleasing a style, and is so strewn with flowers, as to make the reader forget that he is travelling the thorny paths of science.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p

Jonathan Laird, the builder of the CSS *Alabama* and Raphael Semmes shared a close mutual friend in Mathew Fontaine Maury, the great American oceanographer named '*The Pathfinder of the Seas*'. Semmes and Maury had been teenage cadets on the USS *Brandywine* in the 1820's and had both joined the Confederate cause.



It was Maury's invention of the submarine 'torpedo' (similar to a modern-day contact mine) that is credited with inflicting far more damage on Unionist shipping than even Raphael Semmes's 'pirate' ship the *Alabama*.

It was Jonathan Laird that had most probably arranged for Maury's wife Ann and his children to live in Birkenhead after the end of the Civil War until her being reunited with her husband in London on 29th March 1866.

Matthew Fontaine Maury monument, Richmond, Virginia (removed in 2020).

Captain Nemo would carry the works of Mathew Fontaine Maury in the 12,000-volume library of his Birkenhead built Nautilus. Raphael Semmes would also pay tribute to his mentor and friend in his memoirs.

Maury would later live at the home of the Reverend Francis Tremlett, (another member of the Royal Mersey Yacht Club at Tranmere, Birkenhead) at his vicarage in Belsize Park London.

Tremlett would later entertain such notable Confederates as ex-president Jefferson Davies, General Lee and Raphael Semmes at the same address. *A whole colony of exiles.*

Philosopher of the Seas! Thou mayest afford to smile at these vain attempts to humble thee. Science, which can never be appreciated by small natures, has no nationality. Thou art a citizen of the world, and thy historic fame does not depend upon the vile traducers of whom I have spoken. These creatures, in the course of a few short years, will rot in unknown graves; thy fame will be immortal! Thou hast revealed to us the secrets of the depths of the ocean, traced its currents, discoursed to us of its storms and its calms, and taught us which of its roads to travel, and which to avoid.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869).

**Raphael Semmes (Captain Nemo) and his mentor
'The Pathfinder of the Seas' Mathew Fontaine
Maury c1860.**



Scarcely any man who withdrew from the old service has been so vindictively, and furiously assailed as Maury.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat.* (1869) p292

Or was one of those scientists like the American Maury, whose career was ruined by a political revolution?

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p91



The Removal of the Statue of Matthew Fontaine Maury – Richmond, Virginia (July 2020)

SPERM WHALES AND BALEEN WHALES

At about eleven in the morning, being on the surface, the Nautilus fell in with a school of whales. An encounter which did not surprise me, for I knew that these animals, under outrageous pressure from hunting, have taken refuge in the higher latitudes.

‘Then you still haven’t seen an Antarctic whale. It is the right whale that you have hunted until now, which never ventures into the warm waters of the equator.’

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p283 -284

The equatorial belt of waters surrounding the earth, between the tropics, whose temperature is generally 80° of Fahrenheit, is as a sea of fire to the “right” whale. It would be as certain death for this species of whale to attempt to cross these waters,

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p422

It is one of the ironies of history that Raphael Semmes, as a lover of the natural world, probably did more than any other person in history to save the whale from extinction.

Semmes sank over thirty whalers. The North American whaling fleet never recovered its prominence after the American Civil War due to the depredations of the CSS *Alabama*, CSS *Shenandoah*, CSS *Florida* and other Confederate commerce raiders – some of whom claimed to have made a ‘pact with the whale’.

In chapter XII of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, Captain Nemo uses the ram of the *Nautilus* to save a pod of baleen whales from being attacked by sperm whales.

The conservationist message from Jules Verne is clear in that Nemo kills whales that kill whales whereas Raphael Semmes killed whalers that kill whales.

Nevertheless the captain was right. The barbaric and unthinking relentlessness of the hunters will one day make the last whale extinct.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p287

The idea that barbaric hunters will one day make the last whale extinct was used as the defining storyline in the 1986 film *Star Trek IV : The Voyage Home*.

CHAPTER XIII THE ICEBERG

CHAPTER XIV THE SOUTH POLE

CHAPTER XV ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT

CHAPTER XVI WANT OF AIR

Captain Nemo navigates the Nautilus towards the South Pole.

So all around the Nautilus, above and below, was an impenetrable wall of ice. We were prisoners of the ice-cap. The Canadian struck the table with his awesome fist. Conseil remained silent. I looked at the captain. His face had resumed its customary impassiveness. He had tossed his arms reflectively. The Nautilus was no longer moving.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p320

Raphael Semmes, the ‘philosophical mariner’, would never have allowed the CSS *Alabama* to either run aground or get stuck in an ice flow. Jules Verne has made Nemo’s navigational skills on the *Nautilus* seem rather suspect in comparison.



Then the Captain spoke again:

*‘Messieurs’ he said in a calm voice, ‘there are two ways of dying in the circumstances in which we find ourselves.’ **The inexplicable character resembled a professor of mathematics carrying out a demonstration for his students.***

‘The first is to die through being crushed. The second is to die of asphyxiation.’

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p320

After the Civil War Raphael Semmes worked as a Professor of Philosophy and Literature at the Louisiana State University and became renowned for his rambling lectures.

J. M. Taylor in his biography ‘*Confederate Raider*’, refers to Semmes’s didactic teaching style towards his university students - ‘*And lectures they were, for there was nothing egalitarian in the admiral’s approach to education*’.

CHAPTER XVII FROM CAPE HORN TO THE AMAZON

Until 3 April, sometimes below and sometimes on the surface, we did not leave the shores of Patagonia. The Nautilus went past the large estuary of the mouth of the Rio de la Plata, and on 4 April was fifty miles off Uruguay. Its direction was still northerly as it followed the long curves of South America. We had now done 16,000 leagues since embarking in the seas of Japan.

At eleven in the morning we crossed the tropic of Capricorn on the 37th meridian, and passed by Cape Frio. To Ned's great displeasure, Captain Nemo obviously disliked the neighbourhood of these populated coasts of Brazil, for he moved with dizzying speed.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p333

Jules Verne here is teasing Raphael Semmes about the illegal seizure of the Confederate Raider CSS *Florida* inside Brazilian territorial waters by the United States Navy on October 7th, 1864. Before she could be returned to the Brazilian Government the CSS *Florida* sank in dubious circumstances at Newport News, Virginia on November 28th, 1864.

Semmes also had his own problems with the Brazilian authorities.

After charging me with sundry violations of the neutrality of Brazil, it ordered me to depart the island, within twenty-four hours.

Hence it behooves the prudent mariner, to give the banks that fringe the coasts of Brazil, a pretty wide berth.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p617 and p625



AN EXPLANATION WITH BRAZIL

UNCLE SAM (to Plenipotentiary) — see here, my sailor boys aren't posted on matters of etiquette, I'll tell 'em how bad they've been. As to the Florida, there she lies, many a fathom deep. If her owner, Jeff, wants her, let him come here and dive for her."

Northern Political Cartoon December 1864.

For two days we visited the deep deserted waters using the inclined planes on the Nautilus to make long diagonal descents, thus reaching all depths. But on 11th April we suddenly moved upwards, and sighted land again near the opening of the Amazon, a vast estuary delivering so much water that it desalinates the sea for a distance of several leagues.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p334

We passed the mouths of the great Amazon, to-day, bearing on its bosom the waters of a continent. We were running along in the deepest and bluest of sea-water, whilst at no great distance from us, we could plainly perceive, through our telescopes, the turbid waters of the great stream, mixing and mingling, by slow degrees, with the ocean.

Numerous tide rips marked the uncongenial meeting of the waters, and the sea gull and penguin were busy diving in them, as though this neutral ground, or rather I should say, battle-ground, was a favorite resort for the small fish, on which they prey.

A drift log with sedate water-fowl seated upon it, would now and then come along, and schools of porpoises were disporting themselves, now in the blue, now in the muddy waters. Unlike the mouths of the Mississippi, there were no white sails of commerce dotting the waters, in the offing, and no giant tow-boats throwing their volumes of black smoke into the air, and, with their huge side-wheels, beating time to the pulsations of the steam-engine.

All was nature. The giant stream ran through a wilderness, scarcely yet opened to civilization. It disembogues a little south of the equator, and runs from west to east, nearly entirely across the continent.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p206

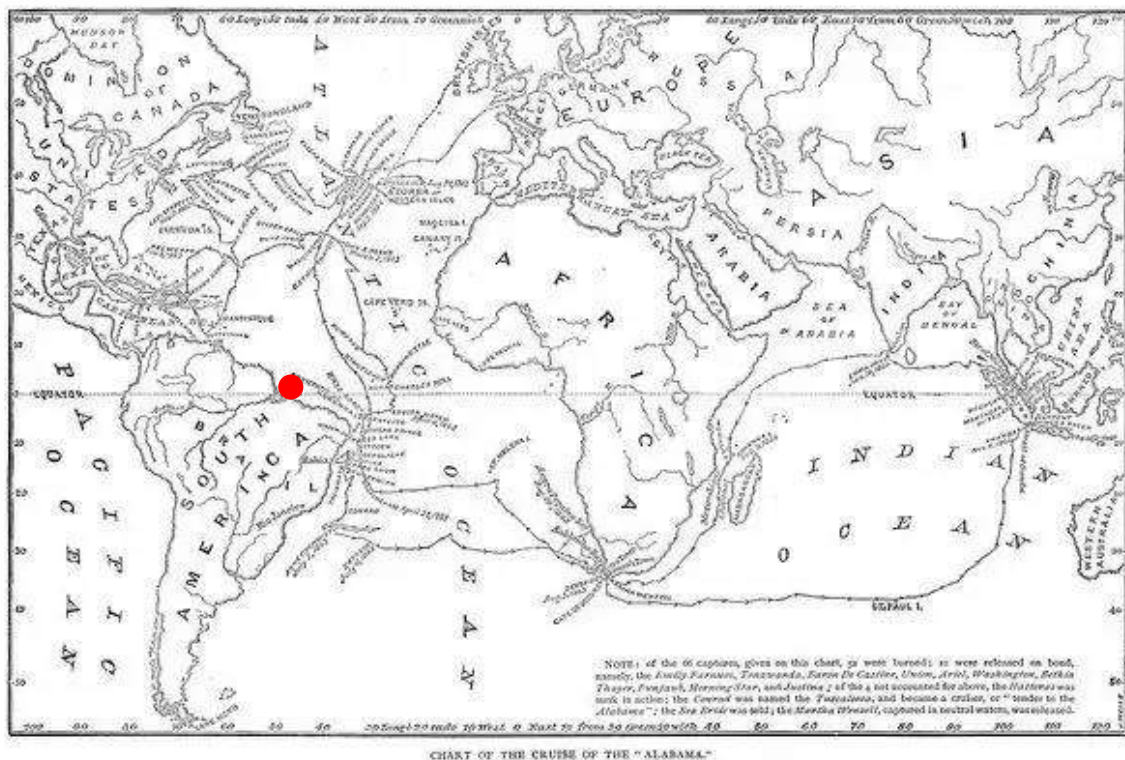


Chart of the Cruise of the “Alabama”

CHAPTER XVIII

SQUID

We had been prisoners on board the Nautilus for six months. We had travelled 17,000 leagues and, as Ned pointed out, there was no reason to expect any change. We couldn't count on the captain of the Nautilus, only on ourselves alone and completely. Also, for some time the captain had become more sombre, withdrawn, and antisocial. He seemed to be avoiding me, as I only met him at rare intervals. Formerly, he had enjoyed explaining the underwater marvels to me; but now he left me to my studies and no longer came into the salon.

What change had come over him? What was he reacting to?

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p339

The poor old Alabama was not now what she had been then. She was like the wearied fox-hound, limping back after a long chase, foot-sore, and longing for quiet and repose. Her commander, like herself, was well-nigh worn down. Vigils by night and by day, the storm and the drenching rain, the frequent and rapid change of climate, now freezing, now melting or broiling, and the constant excitement of the chase and capture, had laid, in the three years of war he had been afloat, a load of a dozen years on his shoulders. The shadows of a sorrowful future, too, began to rest upon his spirit.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p749

For my part, I did not wish my intriguing and original studies to be buried with me. I was now in a position to write the real book of the sea, and I wanted this book to appear sooner rather than later.

It was about eleven 'clock when Ned Land drew my attention to a formidable swarming moving through the large expanses of seaweed.

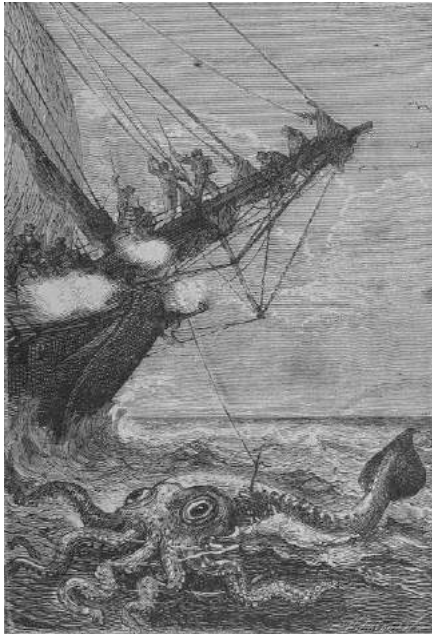
Well, I said, 'these are real squid's caves, and I would not be surprised to see a few monsters here!'

'I long to come face to face with one of those squid, I have heard about so often, which can drag ships down to the bottom of the seas. Those beasts are called Krak ..'

'Crackpots ...' the Canadian interjected.

'Krakens,' continued Conseil, without paying attention to his companion's joke.

'Hey, who the hell has ever believed in them?' exclaimed the Canadian.



'In 1861, north east of Tenerife, at the approximate latitude where we are now, the crew of the sloop Alecton sighted an enormous squid swimming in its wake. Captain Bouyer closed on the animal and attacked it with harpoons and guns, but without great success, for bullets and harpoons passed through the soft flesh like unset jelly. After several unsuccessful attempts, the crew managed to put a slip knot round the mollusc's body. The knot slid as far as the tail-fins and stopped there. They then tried to haul the monster on board, but it was so heavy that the rope pulled the tail off, and deprived of its adornment, it disappeared under the water.

He attacked her with a harpoon.

'An indisputable fact, my good Ned. That was why it was proposed to call it "Bouyer's squid".'

'And how long was it?' he asked.

'Did it not measure about six metres?' said Conseil, standing at the window and examining the holes in the cliff.

'Precisely,' I replied.

'Was its head not crowned with eight tentacles, which waved in the water like a nest of serpents?

Were its eyes not extremely prominent and large?'

'Yes Conseil.'

'And was its mouth not a real parrot's beak, a formidable one at that?'

'Indeed.'

Well, if monsieur pleases,' calmly replied Conseil, 'if that isn't Bouyer's squid then at least it must be one of its brothers.'

I gaped at him. Ned rushed to the window.

'What a frightening beast!' he exclaimed.

It was a squid of colossal dimensions.



It was a squid of colossal dimensions, eight metres in length. It was moving backwards at extreme velocity as it headed towards the Nautilus. It was staring with its enormous fixed eyes of sea-green hue. Its eight arms, or rather legs, were not only implanted on its head, thus giving these animals the name of cephalopods, but were twice as big as its body and waving around like the Furies' hair.

We could distinctly see the 250 suckers in the form of hemispherical capsules on the inside of the tentacles. Sometimes these suckers were placed on the salon's windows and stuck there. The monster's mouth – a horny beak like a parrot's – was opening and closing vertically. Its tongue emerged oscillating from this pair of shears, and was made of a horny substance, itself equipped with several rows of sharp teeth. What a freak of nature: a bird's beak on a mollusc! Its body, cylindrical but swollen in the middle, formed a fleshy mass that had to weigh 20 to 25 tons. Its colour changed in quick succession according to the animal's irritation and went progressively from pale grey to reddish brown.

What was the mollusc irritated at? Undoubtedly at the Nautilus, more formidable than it, and on which its sucking arms and mandibles could not really take a hold.

Other squid were indeed appearing at the starboard window. I counted seven of them. They formed a procession accompanying the Nautilus, and I could hear the grinding of their beaks on the metal hull.

Suddenly the Nautilus stopped. The shock made its whole framework tremble.

A minute passed before Captain Nemo, followed by his first officer, came into the salon.

'A curious collection of squid.' I said, in the detached tone a visitor would use in front of the window of an aquarium.

'Right,' he replied, 'and we are going to fight them hand to hand.'

'The propeller has stopped. I think that the corneous mandibles of one of the squid have got caught in its blades, preventing us moving.'

'And what are you going to do?'

'surface and massacre all the vermin.'

'A difficult task.'

'Electric bullets are indeed powerless against this soft flesh, for they do not find enough resistance to explode. But we will attack them with axes.'

'And with harpoons, monsieur,' said the Canadian, 'if you will accept my help.'

I accept, Master Land'

We are right behind you,' I said as Captain Nemo headed for the central staircase.

About ten men armed with grappling axes were standing ready for an attack. Conseil and I picked up two as well. Land seized a harpoon



The Nautilus meanwhile had surfaced. One of the sailors, standing on the top steps, was unscrewing the bolts of the hatch. But the bolts were hardly free when the hatch suddenly shot open, clearly yanked up by the suckers on the arm of the squid.

Immediately one of those long arms slid like a snake into the opening as twenty others waved above. With a single axe blow, Captain Nemo severed the formidable tentacle, which then slid down the stairs, twisting.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p346

One of those long arms slipped through the opening.

While we were all rushing together towards the platform, two other arms, lashing through the air, landed on the sailor in front of Captain Nemo – and carried him off with irresistible force.

Captain Nemo exclaimed and rushed outside. We followed him as quickly as we could.

What a scene! The poor man, seized by the tentacle and glued to its suckers, was being rocked in the air at the whim of its enormous trunk. He was groaning as he suffocated, and he was shouting: 'Au secours! Au secours!' These words in French flabbergasted me. So I had a compatriot on board, perhaps several! I will hear his heartbreaking appeal in my ears till the end of my life

The unfortunate man was lost. Who could possibly have wrested him from that powerful embrace? However, Captain Nemo rushed at the squid, and with a single axe blow chopped off another arm. His first officer was angry fighting other monsters crawling over the sides of the Nautilus.

The squid brandished the victim like a feather.



For a moment I thought that the poor man enlaced by the squid could be rescued from its powerful suction. Seven arms out of eight had been severed. A single one, brandishing the victim like a quill, remained twisting in the air. But just as Captain Nemo and his deputy were rushing at the animal, it gave out a spurt of blackish liquid, secreted from a bursa in its abdomen. We were blinded. By the time the cloud had cleared, the squid had vanished, carrying with it my unfortunate compatriot.

Then our rage boiled over against the monsters. We were no longer in control of ourselves. Ten or twelve squid had invaded the platform and sides of the Nautilus. We were sliding around in the midst of the truncated serpents, tossing about on the platform in waves of blood and black ink. It was as if the viscous tentacles were coming back to life again like Hydra's heads. Ned Land's harpoons plunged repeatedly into the glaucous eyes of the squid, destroying them with each blow. But my brave companion was suddenly knocked down by the tentacles of a monster he could not avoid.

God! My heart leapt with revulsion and horror! The formidable squid's beak gaped open before Ned. The poor man was about to be cut in two. I rushed to help him. But Captain Nemo had got there before me and his axe disappeared between the two enormous jaws. Miraculously saved, the Canadian got up and drove his harpoon right through the triple heart of the squid.

'For services rendered!' Captain Nemo said.

Ned bowed without replying.

The battle had lasted for a mere quarter of an hour. The vanquished monsters, mutilated and terribly wounded, finally retreated and then disappeared under the waves.

Captain Nemo, red with blood, motionless near the searchlight, examined the sea which had swallowed up one of his companions, as large tears flowed from his eyes.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p347

We began now to fall in with some of the curiosities of the China Sea. Salt-water serpents made their appearance, playing around the ship, and cutting up their antics. These snakes are from three to five feet long, and when ships anchor at night, have been known to crawl up the cables, and make their way on deck through the hawse-holes, greatly to the annoyance of the sailors who chance to be sleeping on deck. They are not known to be poisonous. Never having been in the China seas before, I was quite amused at the gambols of these miniature sea-serpents. Seeing an old sailor stopping up the hawse-holes, with swabs, one evening after we had anchored, I asked him what he was about. "I'm stopping out the snakes, y'r honor," he replied. "What," said I, "do they come on deck?" "Oh! yes, y'r honor; when I was in the ship Flying Cloud, we killed forty of them on deck in one morning watch."

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p695

CHAPTER XIX

THE GULF STREAM

*None of us will ever forget that terrible scene of 20 April. I wrote about it under the imprint of powerful emotions. Since then, I have re-examined the narrative and read it to Conseil and Ned. They found it factually correct, but too pallid. To paint such a picture would take the pen of the most illustrious of our poets, the author of *Les Travailleurs de la mer*.*

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p348

Les Travailleurs de la mer (The Toilers of the Sea) is a maritime novel by Jules Verne's great friend Victor Hugo and set on the Channel Island of Guernsey. The book features a battle with a giant octopus. This is Verne's second reference to Hugo following the revelation that Captain Nemo has Hugo's portrait of the abolitionist John Brown adorning the bed chamber wall of his Birkenhead built Nautilus.

I said that Captain Nemo was weeping as he regarded the waves. His grief was immense. This was the second companion he had lost since we had arrived on board, and what a death! This friend had been crushed, suffocated, and broken by the formidable arms of the squid, then ground in its iron jaw, and so would not be able to rest with his companions in the peaceful waters of the coral cemetery.

Captain Nemo went back to his room, and I did not see him for some time. But how clearly sad, desperate, and irresolute he was, if I can judge the state of his soul from our ship, which reflected all his moods! The Nautilus no longer maintained a fixed course. It came, it went, it drifted like a plaything on the waves. Its propeller had been freed, and yet was hardly used. The Nautilus was sailing at random, unable to tear itself away from the scene of its great battle, the sea which had swallowed up one of its members!

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p348

My ship was getting very much out of repair. The hard usage to which she had been subjected since she had been commissioned had very much impaired her strength, and so constantly had she been under way, that the attrition of the water had worn the copper on her bottom so thin that it was daily loosening and dropping off in sheets. Her speed had, in consequence, been much diminished. The fire in her furnaces, like that of the fire-worshipping Persian, had never been permitted to go out, except for a few hours at rare intervals, to enable the engineer to clink his bars, and remove the incrustations of salt from the bottoms of his boilers. This constant action of fire and salt had nearly destroyed them.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p709

*Ten days went by this way. It was only on 1 May that the Nautilus again set a clear course for the north, after sighting the Bahamas at the opening of the Old Bahama Channel. **We were following the current of the sea's largest river, with its own banks, its own fish, and its own temperature. I refer to the Gulf Stream.***

*It is indeed a river, flowing freely through the middle of the Atlantic, but without mixing with the surrounding ocean's water. It is a salt river, saltier than the surrounding sea. Its average depth is 3,000 feet, and width 60 miles. **At places it moves at a speed of 4 kilometres an hour.** The unchanging volume of its water is larger than all the rivers of the globe put together.*

*The true source of the Gulf Stream, discovered by Commander Maury, its starting-point so to speak, is the Golfe de Gascogne. **It was in this oceanic river that the Nautilus was sailing.***

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p348

*Still, the European-bound ships defy all the bad weather, so prevalent in this stream, on account of the easterly current which accelerates their passage, **at the rate of from two, to three miles, per hour.** The stream, therefore, has been literally bearded by commerce, and has become one of its principal highways. **It is because it is a highway of commerce that the Alabama now finds herself in it.***

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat.* (1869) p457

I too was feeling homesick. It was nearly seven months since our last news from land. In addition, Captain Nemo's isolation, his taciturnity, and especially his changed mood since the battle with the squid – all this made things appear in a different light to me.

I knocked on his door. There was no reply. I knocked again, then turned the knob. The door opened.

I went in. The captain was there. Bent over his desk, he had not heard me. Determined not to leave until I had spoken to him, I went up to him. He raised his head, frowned brusquely, and said to me in an abrupt tone:

'You here! What do you want?'

'To speak to you, captain.'

'But I am busy, monsieur, I am working. Will you not give me the same freedom to remain alone that I give to you?'

He showed me a manuscript open on his desk, and said to me in a graver tone:

*This, Dr Arronax, is written in several languages. It contains a summary of my studies of the sea, and God willing, it will not perish with me. **This manuscript, signed with my name and containing the story of my life, will be enclosed in a small floating container. The last survivor from among us on the Nautilus will cast the container in the sea, and it will go wherever the waves carry it***

*The name of this man! His own true story written by himself! **Would his mystery be unveiled one day?** But at the moment, I only saw what he said as a way of broaching my subject.*

*'Captain,' I replied, 'I can only approve your intentions. The results of your studies must not be lost. But the means you employ seem slightly crude to me. **Who knows where the wind will send the container, into whose hands it will fall.***

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p353

Two of the members of my boat's crew being around me, when the papers were brought, insisted that I should give them to them to take care of. They were good swimmers, they said, and would be sure to preserve them for me. I gave each a package—put up tightly between small slats—and they thrust them in the bosoms of their shirts. One of them then helped me off with my coat, which was too well laden with buttons, to think of retaining, and I sat down whilst the other pulled off my boots. Kell stripped himself in like manner. The men with the papers were both saved. One swam to a French pilot-boat, and the other to the Deerhound. I got both packages of papers. The seaman who landed on the French coast sought out Captain Sinclair, who was still at Cherbourg, and delivered them to him. A writer in the London "Times" thus describes how I got the other package: "When the men came on board the Deerhound, they had nothing on but their drawers and shirts, having been stripped to fight; and one of them, with a sailor's devotedness, insisted on seeing his Captain, who was then lying in Mr. Lancaster's cabin, in a very exhausted state, as he had been intrusted by Captain Semmes with the ship's papers, and to no one else would he give them up. The men were all very anxious about their Captain, and were rejoiced to find that he had been saved. They appeared to be a set of first-rate fellows, and to act well together, in perfect union, under the most trying circumstances.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p764

Memoirs of a Service Afloat During the War Between the States the writings of the 'British Pirate' Raphael Semmes, plainly open to the world for one hundred and fifty years, containing his deepest thoughts and quoting English, French, Latin and Greek. Saved from the cold waters of the English Channel by his loyal crew and the sailors of the Birkenhead yacht the *Deerhound*.

It contains his observations of the sea, of ocean currents, hurricanes, volcanoes, whales, and the coral seas. Raphael Semmes, the unreconstructed Confederate with distinct attitudes on racial hierarchies, slavery and the south. These attitudes have been challenged by Jules Verne in his most complex novel – *Mysterious Island* where Raphael Semmes will once again play Captain Nemo, but he will also play the other roles of the reformed pirate Ayrton, the Unionist sailor Pencroft and the enslaved orangutan Jup, and these four hidden characters will all combine to show, in literature at least, the path to repentance for Raphael Semmes.

Did Semmes repent in real life? Others may find this out. Let us hope that it does not take another one hundred and fifty years.

The history of Captain Nemo, revealed at last, by a Birkenhead born Geography teacher, whose ancestors lived in Lamb's Farm (now Church Farm) in Bidston village, Birkenhead and undoubtedly knew the Bidston Lighthouse keeper's son who rescued Semmes from certain death.

The storm broke on that same 18 May, when the Nautilus was off Long Island and a few miles from the passes into New York. Captain Nemo, unshakeable in the blasts, had taken position on the platform. He had made himself fast at the waist, to resist the huge wash of the waves. I had hoisted myself up and attached myself as well, dividing my admiration between the storm and the incomparable man defying it.

Now lying on its side, now erect like a mast, the Nautilus was pitching and rolling frighteningly.



And yet even in the midst of the storm the Nautilus bore out the words of a wise engineer: 'There is no well-constructed hull that cannot withstand the sea!'

The drops had become a fiery rain. The tiny points of water had changed into exploding crests. It was exactly as if Captain Nemo, desiring a death worthy of him, was endeavouring to be struck by lightning. In a terrible movement of pitching, the Nautilus erected its steel ram into the air like the point of a lightning conductor, and I could see large sparks spurting from it.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p357

The rain had been followed by a down pour of fire.

My ship was getting very much out of repair. The hard usage to which she had been subjected since she had been commissioned had very much impaired her strength, and so constantly had she been under way, that the attrition of the water had worn the copper on her bottom so thin that it was daily loosening and dropping off in sheets. Her speed had, in consequence, been much diminished.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p709

CHAPTER XX

47 24' N, 17 28' W

Was Captain Nemo going to head north, so that he could land in the British Isles? No; to my great surprise, he went back down south again, heading for the seas of Europe. While we were working our way around the Emerald Isle, I briefly glimpsed Cape Clear and Fastnet lighthouse which provides light for thousands of ships from Glasgow and Liverpool.

An important question then arose in my mind. Would the Nautilus dare to venture into the English Channel?

The Nautilus was still heading south. On 30th May it came within sight of Land's End, and passed between that extreme point of England and the Scilly Isles, on the starboard side. If it wanted to go into the Channel, it would have to cut sharply to the east. It did not do this.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p363

... and thence to the British Channel, making the Lizard on the 10th of June, ... at ten the next morning, we made Cape La Hague, on the coast of France. We were now boarded by a French pilot, and at thirty minutes past noon, we let go our anchor in the port of Cherbourg.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p750

Nemo did not go east, west or north, there is only one direction he can go – south, towards Cherbourg, which on the 19th June 1864 became the final resting place of the CSS Alabama.

During the whole of 31 May the Nautilus described a series of circles on the surface, greatly intriguing me. It seemed to be looking for a spot which it had difficulty in finding.

The Nautilus is circling over the site of the Battle of Cherbourg, where, on 19th June 1864, some 19,000 people watched the CSS Alabama and the USS Kearsarge battle in great circles around one another.

Plan of the Circle Battle.



At noon, Captain Nemo came to measure the position himself. He did not speak to me. He seemed more sombre than ever. What could be making him so unhappy? Was it being so close to European shores? Did he have memories of his abandoned homeland? In that case, what did he experience – remorse or regret? For a long time such thoughts filled my mind, and I had a hunch that chance would betray the Captain's secrets.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p363

Nemo is searching for the grave of the CSS *Alabama* off Cherbourg.



The following day, 1 June, the Nautilus performed the same manoeuvres. It was clear that it was trying to identify a precise point in the ocean. As on the day before, Captain Nemo came to take the height of the sun. The sea was fine, the sky pure. Eight miles to the east, a large steam-driven ship stood out on the line of the horizon. No flag was visible on its gaff and I could not identify its nationality.

I was on the platform. When he had taken our position, the captain said only these words:

'It is here!'

'It is here!' said Captain Nemo.

He went back down through the hatch. Had he seen the vessel, which now changed direction and seemed to be coming nearer? I cannot say.

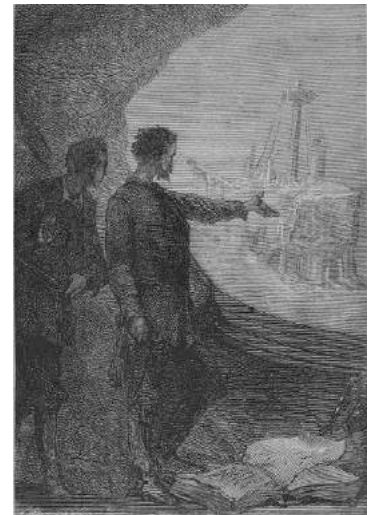
I went back to the salon. The hatch was closed, and I could hear the hissing of water in the tanks. The Nautilus began to sink – straight down, for its propeller was not operating and so did not affect this movement. A few minutes later, it stopped at a depth of 833 metres, and came to rest on the ocean floor.

The salon's luminous ceiling went out, the panels opened, and through the windows I could see the sea brightly lit up by the searchlight for half a mile around.

On the seabed to starboard appeared a large extumescence which drew my attention. It resembled ruins buried under a coating of whitish shells like a cloak of snow. When I examined the shape more carefully, I thought I recognized the thickened forms of a ship without masts, which must have sunk bow first. The wreck certainly dated from a long time before. Its hull must have spent many years on the ocean floor to be so encrusted by limestone from the water.

What was this ship? Why was the Nautilus coming to visit its tomb? Was it not some shipwreck that had sunk the vessel?

Nemo has found the last resting place of the CSS *Alabama*.



'The Vengeur !' I exclaimed.

'Yes, monsieur.

The Vengeur! A fine name! said Captain Nemo, crossing his arms.

Nemo has found the CSS '*Alabama*' – his avenger, the ship of Captain Raphael Semmes, who upon being challenged by the USS *Kearsarge* in Cherbourg Harbour on June 19th 1864, preferred, in Semmes's own words to 'give battle' rather than surrender.

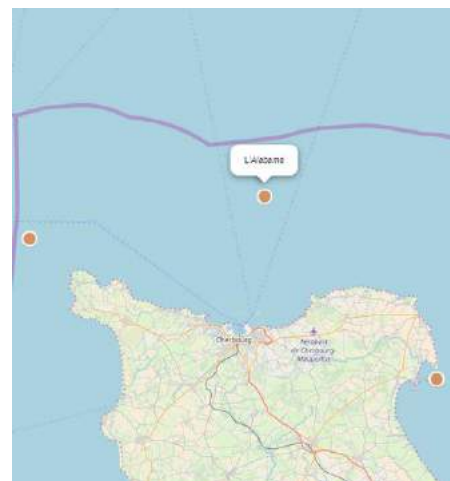
Verne's description of the real '*Vengeur*' is a decoy and Raphael Semmes, in fiction at least will have revenge on the USS *Kearsarge* for the sinking of his beloved CSS *Alabama*.

The Wreck of the CSS *Alabama*.

In October 1984, the French minesweeper *Circe* located a wooden ship lying in 200 feet of water, offshore from Cherbourg Harbour.

Divers caught sight of a cannon and brought up some dishes and gun tracks. Max Guerout, a marine archaeologist announced the discovery of the CSS *Alabama* at an international conference on maritime history at Charleston, South Carolina in September 1987.

The last resting place of the CSS *Alabama*.



The *Alabama* lies on her side at a thirty-degree angle and only one third of the wooden hull has survived 150 years of tidal movements and marine growth. Thousands of artifacts remain on the ship and scattered around the seabed.

The ship's iron wheel was salvaged with the Confederate motto "Aide-toi et Dieu t'aidera" ('God helps those who help themselves') still clearly visible. This motto will raise two further questions but only after our adventure is done.



The ship's wheel of the CSS *Alabama* showing the motto Aide-toi et Dieu t'aidera.



The ships bell and a 32-pounder cannon have also been retrieved...



...together with three flush toilets and military shell cases...



...and wine glasses from the officer's mess.

The ship becomes a personification. She not only

"Walks the waters like a thing of life,"

but she speaks in moving accents to those capable of interpreting her.

Raphael Semmes

CHAPTER XXI

A MASSACRE

Nemo is about to wreak his revenge on the USS *Kearsarge* on behalf of his alter ego Raphael Semmes.

The way he spoke, the unexpectedness of the scene, the recounting of the story of the patriotic ship, and the vehemence with which this strange character had pronounced the last words about the Vengeur. Leaving me in no doubt about his meaning: everything combined to make a deep impression on me. My eyes no longer left the captain. With his arm stretched out towards the sea, he was studying the glorious wreck with glowing eyes.

Perhaps I would never know who he was, where he came from, where he was going, but I could see the man more and more distinctly from the scientist. It was not common misanthropy that had enclosed Captain Nemo and his companions in the flanks of the Nautilus, but a monstrous or sublime hatred that time could not diminish.

Was this hatred still seeking revenge? The future would soon show me.

Meanwhile the Nautilus was moving slowly up to the surface, and I could see the indistinct forms of the Vengeur disappearing little by little. Soon a slight rolling told me that we were floating in the open air.

At this moment a dull explosion sounded. I looked at the captain. He did not move.

I left him and went up to the platform. Conseil and the Canadian were there before me.

'Where did that explosion come from?' I asked.

'From the firing of the cannon,' replied Ned.

I looked in the direction of the ship that I had seen. It had got nearer and was clearly sailing at full steam. It was now six miles away.

'What sort of vessel is it, Ned?'

From its rigging and its low masts, I would bet that it is a warship. I hope it comes at us and sinks us if need be, our damned Nautilus!'

'Friend Ned,' replied Conseil. What harm can it do to the Nautilus? Will it come and attack it underwater? Will it shell it at the bottom of the seas?'

*Soon the Canadian announced to me that the vessel was a great warship with a cutwater: **an armour-plated double-decker**. Thick black smoke was pouring from its two funnels.*

A few seconds later, the water was disturbed by the impact of a heavy body, splashing the stern of the Nautilus. Shortly afterwards, an explosion struck my ear.

'What are they firing at us? I exclaimed.

'Good for them,' murmured Ned.

A sudden revolution took place in my mind. The existence of the so-called monster must have been cleared up. When the Canadian struck it with his harpoon during the encounter with the Abraham Lincoln, Captain Farragut must have realised that the narwhal was a submarine boat, more dangerous than any supernatural cetacean.

Yes, that had to be the case, and this terrible machine of destruction was clearly being pursued over every ocean.

It would indeed be terrible if Captain Nemo was using the Nautilus for the sake of revenge, as it now seemed clear! During that night in the middle of the Indian Ocean when he locked us up in that cell, had he not attacked some ship? That man buried in the coral cemetery, had he not been the victim of a collision caused by the Nautilus? Yes, I repeat. It had to be so. Part of Captain Nemo's mysterious life had been unveiled, and if his identity was still not clear, at least the coalition of nations against him were no longer pursuing a fantastic being, but a man who had sworn implacable hatred against them.

All this formidable past appeared before my eyes. Instead of encountering friends on the approaching ship, we could only find merciless enemies.



Meanwhile the shells were increasing around us. Some of them hit the surface of the sea, bounced off, and went considerable distances. But none hit the Nautilus.

***The armour plated ship** was no more than three miles away now. In spite of the violent cannon attack, Captain Nemo did not appear on the platform, and yet if one of those conical projectiles had squarely struck the hull of the Nautilus, it would have been fatal.*

Wretch! Do you want!

Ned Land took out his handkerchief and waved it in the air. But he had hardly raised it when despite his tremendous strength he was floored by an iron hand and cast to the deck.

'Wretch!' exclaimed the captain. 'Do you want me to nail your miserable carcass to the cutwater of the Nautilus when it launches itself at that ship.'

Captain Nemo, terrible to hear, was yet more terrifying to behold. His face had grown pale: his heart must have undergone spasms and stopped beating for a moment. His pupils were highly contracted. His mouth was no longer speaking, it was roaring. With his body bent forward, he was twisting the Canadian's shoulders in his hands.



Then letting him go and turning again to the man-of-war, whose shells were raining down around him:

'Ah, you know who I am, ship of an accursed nation! He declaimed in a powerful voice. 'As for me, I do not need your colours to identify you! Look I am going to show you mine!'

And Captain Nemo unfurled a black flag at the front of the platform, identical to the one he had planted at the South Pole.

His gaze seemed to attract him.

At that moment, a shell obliquely struck the hull of the Nautilus, but without making a hole, ricocheted near the Captain, and finished up in the sea.

Captain Nemo shrugged his shoulders. Then, addressing me:

'Go inside,' he said curtly. 'Go inside, you and your companions.'

'Monsieur!' I exclaimed. 'Are you going to attack this ship?'

'I'm going to sink it.'

'You are not!'

'I am,' he coldly replied. 'Do not take it on yourself to judge me, monsieur. Fate is showing you what you should not have seen. The attack has come and the response will be terrible. Go back down.'

'What ship is this?'

'You do not know? Well so much the better! Its nationality will remain a secret for you. Go down.'

The Canadian, Conseil, and I could only obey. About fifteen sailors from the Nautilus stood around the captain, staring with implacable hatred at this ship bearing down on them. The same thought of revenge was clearly driving all their souls.

I went back in just as another projectile grazed the Nautilus's hull. I could hear the captain exclaiming:

'Strike, crazy ship! Waste your useless shells. You will not escape the Nautilus's ram. But it is not on this spot that you shall perish! I do not want your ruins to sully the remains of the Vengeur!'

I went back to my room. The captain and his deputy remained on the platform. The propeller started up. The Nautilus moved away at speed, and was soon out of the reach of the vessel's shells. But the pursuit continued, with Captain Nemo content merely to maintain his distance.

At about four in the afternoon, unable to contain the impatience and worry devouring me, I returned to the central staircase. The hatch was open. I ventured out on to the platform. The captain was still agitatedly pacing up and down. He was looking at the ship, five or six miles to leeward. He was moving back and forth like a wild animal, as he allowed himself to be pursued and so drew it eastwards. However, he did not attack. Perhaps he was still hesitating?

I tried to intervene one last time, but I had hardly addressed Captain Nemo, before he imposed silence on me.

'I am the law, I am the justice! He said. 'I am the oppressed, and they are the oppressor! It is because of them that everything I loved, cherished, venerated – country, wife, children, parents – perished as I watched! Everything I hate is there! Keep quiet!'

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p369

To Raphael Semmes the CSS Alabama was his wife...

I had surveyed my new ship, as we approached, with no little interest, as she was to be not only my home, but my bride.

When her awnings were snugly spread, her yards squared, and her rigging hauled taut, she looked like a bride, with the orange-wreath about her brows, ready to be led to the altar.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat.* (1869) p404

...and the crew of the CSS Alabama were his children.

No one who is not a seaman can realize the blow which falls upon the heart of a commander, upon the sinking of his ship. It is not merely the loss of a battle—it is the overwhelming of his household, as it were, in a great catastrophe. The Alabama had not only been my battle-field, but my home, in which I had lived two long years, and in which I had experienced many vicissitudes of pain and pleasure, sickness and health. My officers and crew formed a great military family, every face of which was familiar to me; and when I looked upon my gory deck, toward the close of the action, and saw so many manly forms stretched upon it, with the glazed eye of death, or agonizing with terrible wounds, I felt as a father feels who has lost his children—his children who had followed him to the uttermost ends of the earth, in sunshine and storm, and been always true to him.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat.* (1869) p763

The Birkenhead built hull of the *Nautilus* and its formidable 'Laird Ram' will enable Raphael Semmes, in the form of Captain Nemo, to have his revenge on Jules Verne's fictional version of the armour plated USS *Kearsarge*.

A noble Roman once stabbed his daughter, rather than she should be polluted by the foul embrace of a tyrant. It was with a similar feeling that Kell and I saw the Alabama go down. We had buried her as we had christened her, and she was safe from the polluting touch of the hated Yankee!

Great rejoicing was had in Yankeedom, when it was known that the Alabama had been beaten. Shouts of triumph rent the air, and bonfires lighted every hill.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p765

I threw a last glance at the warship, which was straining at full steam. Then I joined Ned and Conseil again.

Preparations were being made which could be called the action stations of the Nautilus. They were very simple. The jackstay forming the handrail around the platform was lowered. The domes for the searchlight and pilot-house slid into the hull so as to form a unified line with it. The surface of the long metal cigar no longer offered a single point that could interfere with its operation.

At five o'clock the log told me that the Nautilus was slowing down. I realised that it was allowing itself to be approached. The explosions were getting louder. The shells were ploughing into the surrounding water, moving through it with a curious hissing sound.

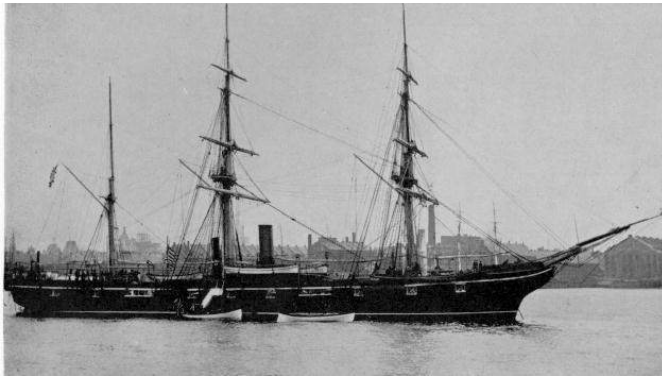
We went to the library. Just as I opened the door giving on to the well of the central staircase, I heard the hatch slam shut.

The Canadian rushed towards the steps, but I held him back.

A familiar hissing sound told me that the water was flooding into the tanks. In a few seconds, the Nautilus had sunk a few metres below the surface.

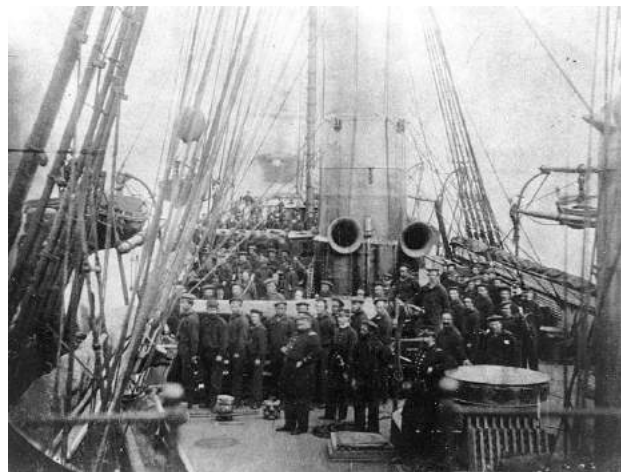
*I understood then what was happening. It was too late to do anything. **The Nautilus was not planning to strike the impenetrable armour of the double-decker but the section below its flotation line, where a metal cover no longer protected the planking.***

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p372



Unbeknown to Raphael Semmes, the USS *Kearsarge*, prior to the battle of Cherbourg had strengthened its wooden hull with anchor chains draped over the side – a *metal cover*. Semmes was incensed at what he saw was a duplicitous trick.

The USS *Kearsarge* in 1861.



**The crew of the USS *Kearsarge* (1864)
– the ‘unknown ship’**

At the end of the engagement, it was discovered by those of our officers who went alongside of the enemy's ship, with the wounded, that her mid-ship section, on both sides, was thoroughly iron-coated; this having been done with chains, constructed for the purpose, placed perpendicularly, from the rail to the water's edge, the whole covered over by a thin outer planking, which gave no indication of the armor beneath. This planking had been ripped off, in every direction, by our shot and shell, the chain broken, and indented in many places, and forced partly into the ship's side. She was effectually guarded, however, in this section, from penetration.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p758

Nemo strikes beneath the waterline, in an underhand manner totally at odds with the character of Raphael Semmes, who, in fiction at least, will have his revenge on the USS *Kearsarge*.

Meanwhile the speed of the Nautilus had noticeably increased as it gathered momentum. Its hull trembled.

Suddenly, I gave a cry. A shock had occurred, but a relatively slight one. I could feel the strength of penetration of the steel cut-water. I could hear scraping noises. The Nautilus carried on by its propulsive source, was passing clean through the vessel, like a sailmaker's needle through canvas!

I could no longer keep still. Mad bewildered, I rushed out of my room and into the salon.

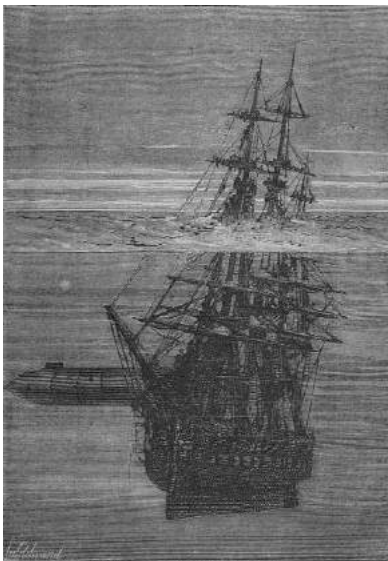
Captain Nemo was there. Silent, sombre, implacable, he was watching the port window. An enormous object was sinking into the water; and, so as to follow every detail of its death throes, the Nautilus was descending into the abyss too. Ten metres away from me I could see a hull torn open, with water rushing in with the sound of thunder, then the double line of cannons and bulwarks. The deck was covered with black shadows all moving around.

The water was rising. The wretches rushed into the rigging, clung on to the masts, were twisted under the waters. It was a human ant-heap caught out by the invasion of the sea.

Paralysed stiff with anguish, my hair standing on end, my eyes unnaturally wide, hardly able to breathe, without air, without voice, I was watching too! An irresistible attraction glued me to the glass.

The enormous vessel was slowly sinking. The Nautilus followed it, watching for its slightest movements. Suddenly, an explosion occurred. The pressure made the decks of the vessel fly off, as if fire had broken out in its hold. The thrust of the water was such that the Nautilus was pushed aside.

Now the unhappy ship sank more quickly. Its crow's nests, laden with victims, went down next its crosstrees, bending under the weight of clusters of men, and finally the tip of its main mast. Then the sombre mass disappeared, and with it the crew of bodies carried down in a formidable undertow ...



I turned to Captain Nemo. That terrible lawgiver, that archangel of hate, was watching still. When everything was finished, Captain Nemo headed for the door of his room, opened it, and went in. My eyes followed him.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p373

The huge ship was slowly sinking.

On the far wall, below the pictures of his heroes, I could see the portrait of a woman, still young, with two small children. Captain Nemo looked at them for a few moments, stretched out his arms to them, and then knelt down sobbing.

Raphael Semmes, in the form of Captain Nemo, has finally had his revenge on the USS *Kearsarge*, for it had destroyed what was closest to him, his young woman, the 'Alabama' bride, and his two small children, the officers and crew of the Alabama.

I had surveyed my new ship, as we approached, with no little interest, as she was to be not only my home, but my bride

She was, indeed, a beautiful thing to look upon.

she looked like a bride, with the orange-wreath about her brows, ready to be led to the altar.

I propose to give him a sight of my military family, and show him how my children played as well as worked; how I governed them, and with what toys I amused them.

The sailor is as improvident, and incapable of self-government as a child.

Poor Jack! how much he is to be pitied! Cut loose early from the gentle restraints of home, and brought into contact with every description of social vice, at an age when it is so difficult to resist temptation, what wonder is it, that we find him a grown-up child of nature, subject to no other restraint than such as the discipline of his ship imposes upon him?

Seamen are very much like children, requiring the reins to be tightened upon them from time to time.

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) various.

The Alabama, which claimed to have sunk 75 merchantmen, was destroyed by the Unionist Kearsarge off Cherbourg on 11th June 1864, and commemorated in a famous painting by Manet. This battle has clear connections with Nemo's final attack, also in the English Channel.

William Butler – *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* – A new translation (2007) Explanatory notes p422.



**The Battle of the Kearsarge and the Alabama
by Édouard Manet.**

The Yacht *Deerhound* is top right.

CHAPTER XXII

THE LAST WORDS OF CAPTAIN NEMO

I had returned to my room where Ned and Conseil were silently waiting. I felt an invincible horror for Captain Nemo. Whatever he had suffered at the hands of men, he did not have the right to inflict punishment in this way. He had made me the witness of his acts of revenge, if not the accomplice. That was already too much.

At eleven o'clock the electric light came on again. I went into the salon. It was deserted. I consulted the various instruments. The Nautilus was fleeing north at a speed of 25 knots, sometimes on the surface of the water, sometimes 30 feet below.

While noting our position on the map, I realized that we were passing near the end of the English Channel, and that our movement was taking us towards the Arctic seas at unsurpassed speed.

By evening, we had covered two hundred leagues of the Atlantic. Shadows fell and the sea was covered with darkness; but then the moon rose.

I went back to my room. I could not sleep. I was assailed by nightmares. The terrifying scene of destruction was repeating over and over in my mind.

Starting from that day, who could have said where the Nautilus took us through that basin of the North Atlantic? Always at a speed that could not be guessed! Always through the Arctic fogs.

Time went on without me being able to calculate it. The time of the clocks on board had been suspended. As in the polar regions, day and night no longer seemed to be following their regular course. I felt myself carried off into the realm of the extra-natural, where Poe's overworked imagination worked at ease. At each moment I expected to see, like the fabulous Gordon Pym, 'a shrouded human figure, very far larger in its proportions than any dweller among men, thrown across the cataract which defends the approaches to the Pole'!

I estimate – but am perhaps mistaken – that this wild movement of the Nautilus carried on for two or three weeks; and I do not know how long it would have lasted if it had not been for the catastrophe that terminated our voyage. Of Captain Nemo there was no longer any sign. Of his first officer either. Not one crew member was visible for a single moment. The Nautilus navigated almost permanently underwater. When it went up to the surface again to replenish its air, the hatches opened and closed automatically. The position was no longer plotted on the planisphere. I had no idea where we were.

Professor Aronnax, Ned and Conseil finally agree that they should escape by taking the Nautilus's boat.

I wanted to know the Nautilus's direction. I made for the salon. We were heading north-north-east at a frightening speed and at fifty metres depth.

I cast a last look at the marvels of nature and treasures of art amassed at the museum, at this unrivalled collection destined to perish one day at the bottom of the seas, together with the man who had assembled it. I wanted to engrave in my mind a last memory of it. I remained an hour thus, bathed in the emanations from the luminous ceiling, reviewing the resplendent treasures behind the panes. Then I returned to my room.

I relived my whole life on board the Nautilus, all the happy and unhappy incidents that had marked it since my disappearance from the Abraham Lincoln: the submarine hunting, Torres Strait, the savages of Papua, the running aground, the coral cemetery, the route under Suez, the island of Santorini, the Cretan diver, Vigo Bay, Atlantis, the ice-cap, the South Pole, the imprisonment in the ice, the battle with the squid, the storm of the Gulf Stream, the Vengeur, and that terrible scene of the sinking of the vessel with all hands. All these events passed before my eyes like minor scenes taking place in the backdrop of the stage. Then against this strange setting Captain Nemo grew out of all proportion. His character was accentuated and took on superhuman dimension. He was no longer a fellow human, but a marine being, a spirit of the seas.

It was half-past nine. I took my head in my hands to stop it exploding. I closed my eyes. I no longer wanted to think. Still half an hour to wait! Half an hour of a nightmare that might send me mad!

Suddenly I heard distant chords from the organ, the sad harmony of an indefinable tune, the veritable complaint of a soul wishing to break all ties with the earth. I listened with all my senses, hardly breathing, plunged like Captain Nemo into musical ecstasies that carried him beyond the limits of this world.

Meanwhile ten o'clock was about to strike. The time had come to leave my room and join my companions.

I arrived at the angled door to the salon. I opened it slowly. The room was plunged into deep darkness. The chords of the organ were still faintly echoing. Captain Nemo was there. He did not see me. I think that even in full light he would not have noticed me, so much did his ecstasy absorb him.

I dragged myself over the carpet, avoiding the slightest contact whose sound might have betrayed my presence. It took me five minutes to reach the far door leading into the library.

I was going to open it, when a sigh from Captain Nemo nailed me to the spot. I realised that he was getting up. I even caught sight of him, for a few rays of light from the lit-up library were filtering as far as the salon. Hew came towards me, his arms crossed, silently gliding

rather than walking, just like a ghost. His oppressed breast heaved with sobbings, and I could hear him murmuring. The closing words reached my ear:

'God almighty! Enough! Enough!

Was it an avowal of remorse, escaping thus from the conscience of this man ...?

Bewildered, I rushed into the library. I climbed the central staircase, followed the upper gangway, and reached the boat. I went through the opening which had already allowed access to my two companions.

'Let's go! Let's go! I exclaimed.

'Straightaway,' replied the Canadian.

The opening in the metal plate of the Nautilus was closed and bolted using an adjustable spanner. Ned had brought with him. The opening in the boat itself was also closed, and the Canadian began to unscrew the bolts still attaching us to the submarine vessel.

Suddenly a sound could be heard inside. Voices were sharply replying to each other. What was it? Had our escape been discovered? I could find Ned Land sliding a knife into my hand.

'Yes,' I murmured, 'we are ready to die!'

The Canadian had stopped his work. But one word, repeated many times, a terrifying word, told me the reason for the agitation spreading through the Nautilus. It was not us the crew were upset with.

They were exclaiming 'Maelstrom! Maelstrom!'

The Maelstrom! Could a more frightening word sound in our ears in a more desperate situation? Were we its dangerous waters off the Norwegian coast? Was the Nautilus being sucked down into that vortex at the very moment our boat had been about to cast off?

It is known that, at the greatest flow, the waters caught between the Faroes and the Lofoten Islands move with irresistible violence. They form a whirlpool from which no ship has ever been able to escape. Monstrous waves rush in from all points of the horizon. They form a funnel fittingly called the 'navel of the ocean', with a power of attraction stretching over a distance of fifteen kilometres. Not only are ships sucked in, but also whales and even polar bears from the Arctic.

It was here that the Nautilus had involuntarily or perhaps voluntarily – been engaged by its captain. It was describing a spiral whose radius was decreasing all the time. The boat, still attached to its side, was also being transported at a dizzying speed. I could feel it. I was experiencing the turning feeling caused by a rotation that goes on for too long. We were in a state of terror! Terror to the highest degree! Our blood was no longer circulating. Our nervous systems were deadened. We were covered with cold sweat, as if on a death-bed. What a noise around our frail boat! What moanings echoed from miles around! What a din from the waters broken on the sharp rocks of the bottom, where the hardest bodies break up, where tree-trunks wear themselves out, where they produce a 'fur of hair', as the Norwegian expression has it!

What a situation! We were being shaken frightfully. The Nautilus was fighting like a human being. Its steel muscles were cracking. Sometimes it stood up, and us with it.

'We need to hold on' said Ned, 'and screw the bolts back in. If we stay attached to the Nautilus, we can still get out alive ...!'



He had not finished speaking, when a crackling sound could be heard. The bolts gave way; and the dinghy was torn from its hole and launched into the midst of the whirlpool like a stone from a sling.

My head struck an iron spar; and because of this violent impact I lost consciousness.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p380

The dinghy launched in the middle of the whirlpool.

The Nautilus, once again is circling through its death throes, in the same ceremonial manner as the CSS Alabama circled the USS Kearsarge in the hour before it sank beneath the waves.

*The enemy now pressed his ship under a full head of steam, and to prevent our passing each other too speedily, and to keep our respective **broadside bearing**, it **became necessary to fight in a circle**; the two ships steaming around a common centre, and preserving a distance from each other of from three quarters to half a mile.*

Raphael Semmes *Memoirs of Service Afloat*. (1869) p757

Plan of the Circle Battle.



CHAPTER XXIII

CONCLUSION

This is the conclusion of our journey under the seas. What happened that night, how the boat escaped from the formidable undertow of the Maelstrom, how Ned, Conseil, and I emerged from the deep, I cannot say. But when I came to, I was lying in the hut of a Lofoten Islands fisherman. My two companions were safe and sound beside me, squeezing my hands. We embraced warmly.



I was lying in a fisherman's hut.

At this moment, we cannot think of returning to France. There are not many means of transport between the north and south of Norway. I am therefore forced to wait for the steamship which makes the fortnightly run from the Cape.

So it is here, in the midst of the good people who saved us, that I am revising the tale of these adventures. It is scrupulously accurate. Not a single fact has been omitted, not the slightest detail exaggerated. It is the faithful narration of an incredible expedition through an element inaccessible to man, although progress will open it up one day.

Will I be believed? I do not know, but it is not important. What I can proclaim now is my right to speak of the seas through which I covered twenty thousand leagues in less than ten months; and to speak of that submarine journey around the world, which has revealed so many of the marvels of the Mediterranean and Red seas and of the Pacific, Indian, Atlantic, Arctic, and Antarctic oceans!

But what became of the Nautilus? Did it resist the embrace of the Maelstroem? Is Captain Nemo still alive? Is he continuing his terrifying reprisals under the ocean, or did he stop at his last massacre? Will the waves one day wash up the manuscript containing the entire story of his life? Will I finally discover his name? Will the nationality of the vessel sunk tell us Captain Nemo's own nationality?

I hope so. I also hope that his powerful vessel overcame the sea's most terrifying deep and that the Nautilus survived where so many ships have perished!

If this is the case, if Captain Nemo does still inhabit his adopted homeland, may hate die down in that wild heart! May the contemplation of so many marvels extinguish his desire for revenge!

May the lawgiver disappear and the scientist continue his peaceful exploration of the seas! If his destiny is strange, it is also sublime. Do I not understand it myself?

Have I not lived ten months of that extra-natural existence? So, to that question which the book of Ecclesiastes posed 6,000 years ago 'hast thou walked in search of the depth?', two men, amongst all men, now have the right to reply. Captain Nemo and I.

Jules Verne *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1869) p381

THE END

The definition of The Ecclesiastian style of storytelling is of the musings of a King as he relates his experiences and draws lessons from them, often self-critical.

The author, who is not named anywhere in the book, does not use his own "voice" until the final verses, where in our case he gives his own thoughts and summarises.

...and finally.

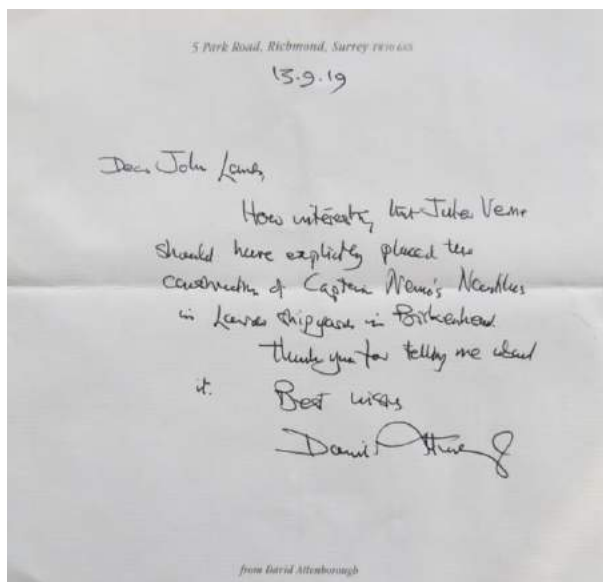
The CSS *Alabama* otherwise known as 'Lairds 290' was the 290th ship to be built at the John Laird shipyard at Tranmere, Birkenhead.

The Lairds shipyard is still active today under the name of Cammell Laird.

On 21st October 2019, exactly one hundred and fifty years after the construction of the *Nautilus*, the 1,390th ship to be built at Laird's of Birkenhead left the shipyard to go on its sea trials.

Built within a few yards of the CSS *Alabama* and Captain Nemo's *Nautilus* the aim of this strange new ship was to fulfil Jules Verne's wishes and let *the scientist continue his peaceful exploration of the seas!*

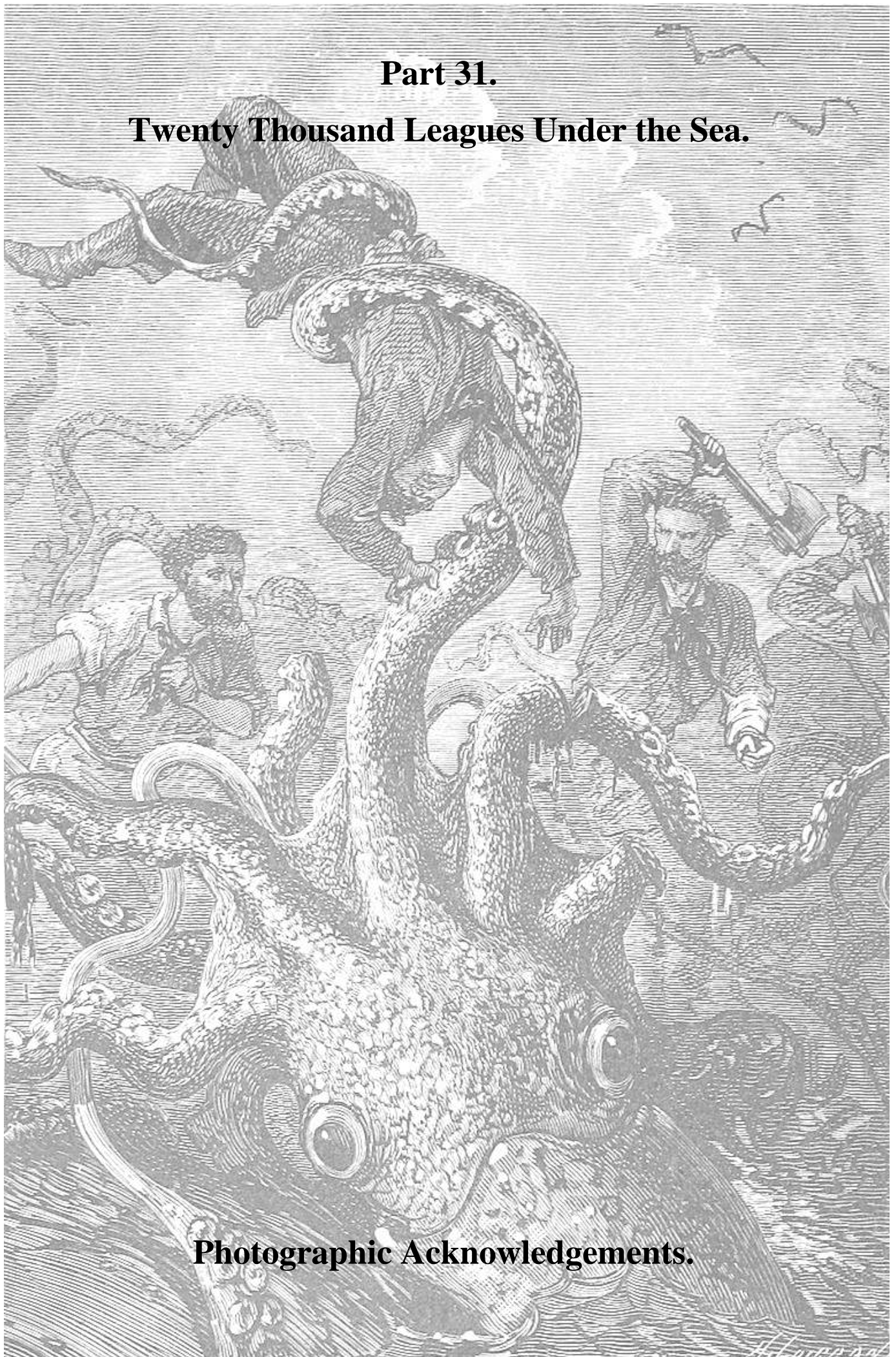
Just like the *Nautilus* the vessel was a *masterpiece of modern technology* and it too would always be associated with someone, who, like Captain Nemo, cares passionately about the future of the natural world.



Next on Jules Verne and the Heroes of Birkenhead.

Part 32. Jules Verne Sets His Classic Science Fiction Novel *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* in Birkenhead.

Part 31.
Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea.



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