

VANITY FAIR - Volume XXVI

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Cartoons and selected excerpts

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MEN OF THE DAY.—No. CCL.

“A Jingo” by T

Vice-Admiral Sir John Edmund Commerell, K.C.B., V.C.

Born fifty-two years ago, Sir Edmund Commerell entered the Navy at thirteen. At sixteen he was already fighting in the operations in South America, and took part in the severe action at Punta Obligada, where he assisted in cutting the chain which defended the river under heavy fire. In 1854, being then twenty-five, he went as Lieutenant in command of a vessel to the Baltic and the Gulf of Bothnia. He was also present at Sebastopol and at most of the actions in the Sea of Azov, the result being that he was twice mentioned in despatches, and received the Victoria Cross for a very hazardous service in the Putrid Sea, by which he effected the destruction of large quantities of the enemy's stores. In 1859 he commanded the *Fury* during the attack on the Taku Forts, and was much commended in despatches, and promoted. From 1866 to 1870 he commanded successively the *Terrible* and the *Monarch*. During the Ashantee War in 1873 he was again on active service, and while reconnoitring in the Prah was wounded by a shot, which he still carries in his chest. He was second in command in the Mediterranean during the Russo-Turkish War, and his presence in the Dardanelles seemed and was a sufficient reason to the Russians for abstaining from any attempt to occupy Gallipoli. In 1874 he was made K.C.B. ; in 1876 he was made a Rear-Admiral ; and in January last he was promoted to be Vice-Admiral. From December, 1879, to May, 1880, he was a Lord of Admiralty, and at the last General Election he stood for the Borough of Southampton as a Conservative, when to the surprise of everybody, he sustained his first defeat.

Admiral Commerell is a born leader of men, a fine sailor, and a man of the most daring courage ; he is very cool-headed in moments of danger, and is so considerate for those who serve under him that he is equally beloved by his men and by his officers. In politics, as becomes him, he is a Jingo, entertaining the belief that England can only maintain her position, as she won it, by being in constant readiness to give and to take hard blows. He is a very good, clear speaker, and what

he says has the signal merit of being plain and straightforward. He is an excellent companion, and altogether a good, brave, honest gentleman.

JEHU JUNIOR

VANITIES.

It is rather sad to see the way in which good men's lives are being thrown away in absurd attempts at increasing our knowledge of Polar geography. What do we want to know about Polar geography? It is true that Dr. Kane fancied he had come to the edge of a great open sea, and it is also true that whales harpooned in Davis's Straits have been found in Behring's Straits. But what would be the possible use of this open sea, even supposing that it existed anywhere but in Dr. Kane's consciousness? Granted that an undercurrent keeps the water of Dr. Kane's romantic sea at a high temperature, how is this warmer water to be reached? If anyone wants the glory of saying that he went higher than everybody else, he can get the same sensation by learning to swarm up posts with great dexterity. When he has grown skilful, let him declare before the world that he can swarm up a higher post than anybody, and then let him issue challenges.



Vincent Brooks, Day & Son, Lith.

'A Jingo'