this motion for selling gun-boats proceeded solely from a desire to get rid of the expence of keeping them.

It has been said that some European nations employ these gun-boats. It is true; but no nation except Spain has many. They are useful only in a dead calm, when a large ship becalmed might be annoyed by them. Although used in the South of Europe to annoy the Barbary powers, it is only there that I have ever heard of their being of service. And, reasoning by analogy, I believe there is no part of the world where they could be of advantage but N. Orleans.

The gentleman from Virginia says that the opposition to gun-boats arises from a party which is in favor of a naval establishment of a different kind. I do conceive that the United States cannot be protected without a certain naval force; I do not conceive that these gun-boats are the best kind; but I do not expect that any other species will be given us in exchange for them. Gentlemen who have thought gun-boats a beneficial species of defence of course do not concur in the idea of selling them; but there are those who conceive that this is a part of the theoretical system which ought to be done away; and I am willing to give them up as far as they can be got rid of.

Mr. Dana said that the abandonment of error and acquisition of wisdom was one of the first fruits of experience. When experience should have taught a person his error, to persevere in it lest he should be thought deficient in wisdom could be no proof of solidity of intellect or attention to the public good. I recollect, said Mr. Dana, that I for one voted for a large number of gun-boats; not that I was very much attached to these things called gun-boats; not that I believed them to constitute a good mode of defence; but as a subordinate aid in the general system. But at the time I voted for it I was not so much aware of their defects as I am now. No species of land or naval force can be of use without activity and skill; and as to this species, if any thing can be hostile to activity which produces stupidity, supineness and neglect, it is gun-boats. As to naval skill, if there be any thing which can teach a man to unknow his knowledge, if I may use the expression, it is being placed on board a gun-boat. As to young men who might be worthy of commissions in the navy, if any thing can render them unworthy of them, it is the remaining on board gun-boats in port. I consider the system of gun-boats laid up in ordinary, as a system of hostility to maritime activity or naval skill. Make a seaman on board a gun-boat! Teach a young gentleman to be fit for command, teach him a habit of subordination and commanding others with propriety on board a gun-boat! It is impossible, sir. I appeal to gentlemen who know any thing of it, whether it is not deemed much to the credit of a young gentleman if he be not ruined by being placed on board a gun-boat. I do not speak of persons employed in active occupations—but I ask where should he find himself at home, see his friends and be received by them, where he should study, where make his observation, keep his log-book, and things of this sort, on board a gun-boat.

The question before us is this—whether gun-boats should be laid up in ordinary? The first section of the bill proposes to give to the President of the United States eventual authority for laying up the frigates and gun-boats in ordinary; and my colleague proposes, that when the frigates shall be laid up in ordinary the gun-boats shall be sold. The question is, whether the *gun boats* shall be laid up in ordinary? I was one, who, about the commencement of the gun-boat fever, when a proposition was under consideration for building a number of gun-boats, proposed an amendment authorising the procuring a quantity of timber, suitable for building gun-boats to such an extent as might be deemed requisite. If this had been done, much would have been saved. What is the principle on which you would lay up a frigate in ordinary for a certain time? It is because this article is so large, so expensive, and requires so much skill, time and care to make it fit for service, that it cannot be got ready under a long space of time; some years even may be required for it. You must have timber of unusual sizes and shapes, the best masts, cordage, &c. These materials will take much time to prepare. Fortifications are a species of permanent defence, not built to meet any particular emergency, but to resist assault whenever made. So frigates are vast floating fortifications; and when not wanted may be laid up so as to be ready for service in a very short time. But as to gun-boats—how long will it take to make a gun-boat throughout? A month or six weeks. In that time they may be turned out by the hundred. Is there any great difficulty in their construction? Do you want the best timber, or are your forests to be searched for masts for them? No, sir. Then why keep them in ordinary at an expence of 430 dollars a year, when not wanted for actual service? There can be no use in it. The idea of laying up gun-boats in ordinary is utterly incompatible with the principle on which gun-boats are built at all. The alarm of war is done away which has existed for 18 months past, and there is no use for them. They will go to decay; you will acquire no naval skill from them; they are odious to seamen and disadvantageous to the public. When you lay up your large ships, sir, you may sell the gun-boats, because they are not worth the care of keeping.

Mr. Cutts said he had hoped that this subject would have been permitted to sleep. The committee who reported this bill (said he) were opposed to selling the gun-boats. When this bill was taken up I had no idea that the question would be agitated; but since it has been brought forward, I will make a few observations upon it.

The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Pitken) has told you that to keep a 56 gun frigate in service for a year will require 120,000 dollars, and to keep 56 gun-boats for the same time, will require 670,000 dollars. I differ with him materially. The cost may be greater, but not so disproportionate. If the gentleman had pointed out a single instance in which it had been proven that gun boats were not useful, I should have listened to him with attention. But neither he nor my colleague (Mr. Dana) who has pushed them out to sea on service for which they were not intended, said any thing of that kind. From my knowledge of naval tactics I can say that in some situations I had rather have five gun-boats than a frigate. The great advantage of gun-boats is that they will carry heavier metal. Whenever an enemy attempts to come into your waters, they will always take into calculation their chances of success or defeat. The tide may turn; they may be becalmed, in which case five gun-boats carrying two and thirty pounders will be of much more service than a frigate. Perhaps, when an enemy's fleet actually enters our waters and arrives at the place of its destination, the wind may blow so strong and the tide run so swift that they cannot get a spring upon their cables to enable them to fire a broad side. The gun-boats, lying in the shoal or calm waters, can lie at greater distance and yet from their weight of metal keep the frigates within range of their own guns; they are low and can take aim with greater certainty than a frigate; and from the smallness of their bulk, even if within range of the frigate's guns, are scarcely tangible. I have seen a debate in the British Parliament in which the British ministry were censured for not protecting the commerce in the Mediterranean. It was said in reply to the charge that the whole British navy could not protect it against gun-boats.

It will be recollected, sir, that when the boats are laid up in ordinary the expence will not be great.—The Secretary of the Navy has given an opinion of the expence; but I must be permitted to say that I know a little of the subject myself. I believe the expence will not be so great as it is stated. Suppose these gun-boats were to be sold, and that, from any change in our foreign relations, they should be wanted this fall. In the first place we shall have been at the expence of purchasing gun-boats at 10,000 dollars and have sold them at 500 dollars each, and shall have to appropriate so much money again for building them; and in the next place it may not be possible to procure them before it is too late for any service.

Gentlemen attempt to deride them. This, sir, is a mode of decrying them which is resorted to from a defect of argument against them. It is said that sailors are dissatisfied with the gun-boats. A sailor will in every station be dissatisfied, whether on board gun-boats or frigates, and this is no argument against them. As to their rotting, I know a little about that too. The difference in their preservation between their being in actual service and in port is very slight. And in respect to the utility of gun-boats I presume gentlemen will not put their knowledge in competition with that of the officers of the Navy and others who have given their opinions in favor of it. If gentlemen would not carry them out to sea, but consider them as a defence proper for bays and rivers, in that line they must be eminently useful. Officers in service no doubt like frigates better than gun-boats, because every man had rather command a frigate than a gun-boat. The gentlemen from Connecticut tells you that the officers have no place to write or take an observation. In reply to that I would observe that the officers have but little writing to do; and that the proper place to take an observation is the deck and not the cabin.

My colleague (Mr. Livermore) says that the Southern gentlemen are fond of this species of defence. I am too; I think it one of the best. Gun-boats are always ready and men can be found on the spur of the occasion to man them. Frigates, however useful when in service, take some time to prepare them, and must be manned with good seamen. For these reasons I am opposed to the motion and hope it will not be adopted.

Mr. Pitkin said that in making his motion it had not been his object to provoke a long disscussion, but from a conviction that the gun-boat system was one which could not be persevered in, that experience must satisfy gentlemen on this floor and had already satisfied the nation of the inefficacy of them, he had thought it his duty to bring the subject before the House. If it be really supposed that this species of arming would be an advantage to the nation, in proportion to its expence, I should be one of the last men to wish to put it down; for although it is true that the appropriations for the army and naval establishments must be great, yet if it be necessary that the whole of these establishments should be kept up, I am willing that they should. The House will judge whether it be necessary or not, and in their decision I shall cheerfully acquiesce. But I did believe, in the event of a settlement of our differences with the other belligerent, it would be better that this species of armament insead of being laid up in ordinary should be sold. Believing this, and the late report of the Secretary of the Navy placing the subject of the gun-boats in a stronger light than they ever yet have been placed, and which must be satisfactory to the House and to the nation, I thought it proper to bring the subject before them.

We are told by the gentleman last up of the efficacy of gun-boats. Five gun-boats equal to one frigate! It is difficult for me to reason on this subject; it is impossible to subscribe to the doctrine. I did not attempt to deride the gun boats. I stated that I had always been opposed to them; that I did not conceive them a species of profitable defence. I believe that the nation has pronounced upon them the sentence that their expence is much greater than the benefit derived from them.

The gentleman calls upon us to shew where they are not useful. I ask him to shew where they are useful. The burthen of proof lies on gentlemen who support them. With respect to the Northern section of the Union, it is the opinion of all classes of the people, and especially of naval gentlemen, that they will not be of service. That they may be of some service in the Mississippi I am not disposed to deny; and I am desirous to give the President power to retain so many as may be necessary for that purpose. Wherever there is a bold shore they can be of but little service. Let the President of the U. S. sell so many as are not necessary for the Mississippi or rivers to the South; for, if the public service requires them, it is to be presumed that he will retain them, as the law prescribes.

But gentlemen say, will you not keep the gun-boats in service on the same principle as you keep the frigates in service, granting that they can be only as useful in case of invasion as the latter? As for myself, sir, if I vote to keep the frigates in service, I do it not for fear that we shall be invaded, because I believe that there is no danger of invasion; but to protect commerce along our coast and preserve peace within our waters. Can gun-boats do that? That they cannot is agreed on all hands. I do believe that if we had had a single frigate stationed in the harbor of New York, the case of Pearce would not have happened. If they had been stationed on our coast the aggressions upon our commerce would not have taken place in the manner in which they have. It is not therefore to protect the country against invasion that I shall vote to continue the frigates in service, leaving it discretionary with the President to lay them up in certain events. Have we given up our idea of protecting commerce in the Mediterranean or in foreign seas? If so, why have we ever attempted it? Why have we expended several millions upon it? The same reasoning does not apply to both species of defence in my opinion.

I do not know what these gun-boats will bring in market, if sold; they might be used for some purposes; but they must be sold at a loss. The difference between what they would bring and what others would cost when wanting, would not be so much as, if laid up in ordinary for four, five or six years, they would cost the U. S. I do not believe, sir, that we shall build more gun-boats hereafter; but if they were necessary, they might be built in a very short time. However the House shall decide I shall be perfectly satisfied. I do believe that the time will arrive, whether it is now come I cannot say, when the gun-boats will be sold; and that whatever naval force we have must be composed of more sterling stuff than gun-boats.

Mr. Cook said that although he had never been a friend to gun-boats, he considered the present an improper time to sell them. And as he was not willing to give the President a discretion over the gun-boats which he had not over the frigates, he said he should vote against the motion.

Mr. Dana said he calculated with perfect certainty on the vote of the gentleman last up, for the same authority did exist in relation to frigates as was proposed to be given in relation to the gun-boats. The real question was not, Mr. D. said, as to the efficacy of gun-boats in time of actual war or the opinion of any of our naval commanders, particularly of that eminent commander commodore Preble, in relation to them. But let gentlemen say, whether any commander ever spoke of laying up the gun-boats in ordinary in the same manner as you would ships of the line and frigates? The talents of a boatswain or boatswain's mate were not necessary to enable a man to judge of this subject, any more than the skill and experience of a recruiting sergeant were necessary in marshaling an army or planning a campaign. Mr. Dana said he wished not to be guided by the opinions of those members of the House who were so fortunate as to know more about merchantmen or armed vessels than some others. As to the defence of our rivers, he asked whether floating batteries were not better, and if a floating battery could not take much steadier aim than gun-boats? They might be useful in some cases; they certainly were useful off Tripoli. They were useful because they were the means of bringing men of valor and skill in conflict with the enemy; and valor and skill prevailed. Whenever it was proper to lay up the frigates, it must be proper to sell the gun-boats. This was what he contended for, let gun-boats be as useful as gentlemen pleased, applaud them as much as they would. As to seamen (said he) they are much like other men, if you give them two qualities for which they are distinguished, bravery and generosity; but for the rest, they like good living and accommodation, and have as much aversion to odious service as any other men. I do not believe that the seamen are willing to go on board of gun-boats, except to fight the enemy. For that purpose they are willing to go on board of them; but as to remaining there in ordinary service, they do not like them any better than other men, nor are they willing to be enlisted to serve on board of them. To be sure, sir, I have no practical knowledge on this subject, because I have not been employed to recruit for the Navy; neither I presume has the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr Cutts), but I derive my information from sources equally as authentic as if I were.

Mr. Holland said he thought that the question of the utility of gun-boats had been long ago settled in their favor. I recollect (said he) when the question for building them was before the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Dana) gave us a history of the mode in which they are built and the uses for which they were proper; and concluded by voting for them. Why is all this change now? Gentlemen say that experience has now shewn their inutility What experience have we had? None. We then knew and now know that they are expensive. That was then, however, no object with gentlemen. Have we had an assault within our waters since the establishment of the gun-boat system? No, sir. We have had no experience of their inutility then, because it must have been derived from an experiment of them. Is it proper that we should now deprive ourselves of that species of defence which has been supposed to be the only proper system? On what ground of relaxation ought we now to act? None that I know of. The principle against which we have contended with foreign nations is still maintained; the principle of blockade by proclamation is still practised on. Would it not be a disgrace to the councils of the nation to dispose of these vessels for a tenth of their cost before the period which called for their employment has expired? As we now have them, why shall we, to save the paltry sum of 60,000 dollars a year, dispose of the most efficient mode of defence? If we are to do any thing on this subject, we ought to sell the frigates and keep the gun-boats The frigates are no protection to our harbors, and nobody dreams of their being useful for the protection of commerce.

We are told they are liable to rapid decay. Why are they so? They will not decay before the frigates. They are made of the same materials, and one will not decay faster than another merely because it is smaller. A plank in one will not rot before a plank in the other. The same objection therefore would lie against *all* naval force.

Gentlemen say that the gun-boats have cost too much. Have not frigates cost too much? Upwards of ten millions of dollars have been spent on the frigates, and it would require a very nice calculation to tell what good they have done. Instead of keeping you in peace, they will increase the objects for war. If we had twenty or thirty frigates, we should soon be in war. If we had not had the Chesapeake, the nation would not have been disgraced. We shall find ourselves insulted in proportion as we increase the number of our frigates. What has been the use of all the money expended on the navy since the last session? Their expence is, always has been, and always will be, greater than their utility. It is futile and improper to attempt to defend our commerce on the ocean with them; for when we attempt a thing to which we are incompetent, we only shew the weakness of our councils and the nakedness of our country. I therefore think the gun-boats should be retained in service and the frigates sold.

Mr. Lyon was against making any change in the situation of the country at all. Was it not to save the time of the House, he would call for the reading of a lengthy report in favor of the gun boats. As to their being disliked by officers and seamen, he observed that there had been no want of applications for offices on board of them. He could see no reason for selling the gun boats.

Mr. Rhea also opposed the motion,

When the question on Mr. Pitkin's motion was taken and negatived in committee and in the House as heretofore stated in the National Intelligencer.

FOR SALE OR RENT.

THE Subscriber offers for Sale on a Lease of three lives, the *Plantation* which he now lives on, about 10 miles from Alexandria on the Accotink run, containing 100 acres, with a Dwelling-house, Smoke-house, and other convenient out-houses. There is on the plantation several springs of most excellent water, and a seat where a Mill might be erected on a never failing stream If I should not sell the above property, I wish to rent the same for a term of years. Any person desirous of viewing the Plantation may be shewn the same, and the terms made known by application to

MICHAEL BROAD.

Accotink, July 17—3t

A *HUNDRED DOLLARS REWARD.*

ABSCONDED from the Subscriber in Alexandria on the 31st of July 1807, Negro JIM, who calls himself JIM MASON. He is a low squat fellow, rather bow-legged and has a down look when closely interrogated; is about 35 or 36 years old, 5 feet 5 or 6 inches high; is a very good Cook and Waiter; understands the management of horses and is an excellent Coachmen.

A few days before his elopement, his wife (who was the property of a neighbor) was sold to a negro purchaser from the neighborhood of Nashville, Tennessee. It is conjectured that Jim either pursued her or that he went off by water and is now in some of the sea-port towns of the United States.

Whoever will apprehend and deliver him to me, shall receive *one hundred dollars*, including all charges, or *fifty dollars* for securing him in any jail so that I get him again—& I will give to any Editor of a newspaper *twenty-five dollars* who will publish this advertisement, provided it lead to the discovery and apprehension of the runaway.

JAMES H. BLAKE.

N. B. I have for RENT on F street, a few doors east of the Bank, Two Framed Buildings. Possession may be had on the 1st of August. J. H. B.

Washington city, July 17—

TAKE NOTICE.

For sale a strong and Handsome COACHEE, *and Pair of Horses*— Cheap for cash or good flour—they will be sold together or separate, to accommodate purchasers. For particulars enquire of

WILLIAMS & WHEAT,
near the Navy Yard.

July 17—3t

TEN DOLLARS REWARD.

ABSCONDED from the service of the Subscriber a few days since, a negro woman named ALLY, a large woman, has lost some of her fore teeth and has remarkable large feet, between 30 and 40 years of age; has a variety of clothing; she was on Sunday last in the city of Washington, but it is believed she is lurking about Alexandria, or some of Mr. Custis's quarters from whom I purchased her. The above reward will be paid for apprehending and securing her so that I get her again, and reasonable charges if brought to Alexandria.

MARY RESSLER.

N. B. All captains or masters of vessels, and all others are forewarned harboring or assisting the escape of said negro, at their peril. M. R.

Alexandria July 17—3t

FOR SALE,
By Lewis Deblois,
At his Store near the Navy Yard.

Old French and Peach Brandy,
Do. Jamaica Spirits,
Holland Gin,
Whiskey by the hogshead or barrel,
Sugars, Teas, Coffee,
Corn, Corn Meal,
Picked Superfine Flour for family use,
Fresh Turkey Figs,
Do. Bloom Raisins, and many other articles which he will sell low for cash.

Washington, July 17—3w