

**QUESTIONS OF THE DAY. - III; OUR
MERCHANT MARINE, HOW IT ROSE,
INCREASED, BECAME GREAT, DECLINED
AND DECAYED, WITH AN INQUIRY INTO
THE CONDITIONS ESSENTIAL TO ITS
RESUSCITATION AND FUTURE PROSPERITY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649364565

Questions of the Day. - III; Our merchant marine, how it rose, increased, became great, declined and decayed, with an inquiry into the conditions essential to its resuscitation and future prosperity by David A. Wells

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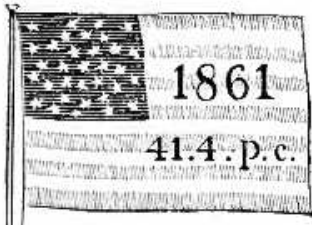
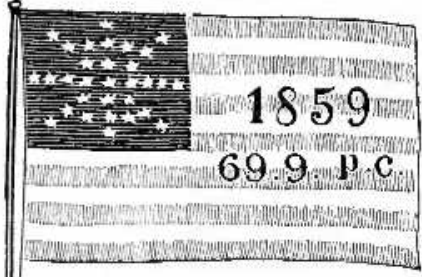
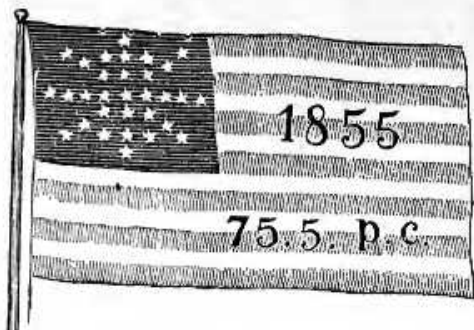
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DAVID A. WELLS

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Proportionate size of the flag of the American Merchant Marine to the domestic export and import business covered by it, at different periods since 1855. Prospective size in 1890? See page 24.

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QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.—III.

OUR
MERCHANT MARINE

HOW IT ROSE, INCREASED, BECAME GREAT,
DECLINED AND DECAYED

WITH

AN INQUIRY INTO THE CONDITIONS ESSENTIAL TO ITS
RESUSCITATION AND FUTURE PROSPERITY

BY

DAVID A. WELLS

"Navigation and naval power are the children, not the parents—the effect, not the cause, of commerce."—McCULLOCH.

The United States treats commerce upon the ocean as an enemy to domestic industry. Great Britain fosters commerce as an aid to her home industries, and as the carrier that provides markets for her manufactures.

NEW YORK
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

27 AND 29 WEST 23D STREET

1890

PREFACE.

THE expulsion of the Moors and Jews from Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella and their successors, and the repeal of the "Edict of Nantes," which deprived France of her best artisans and industries, have been accepted by all historians and economists as the two most striking and exceptional examples in modern times, of great national industrial disaster and decay directly contingent on unwise and stupid, but at the same time deliberately adopted, state policies. It has been reserved for the United States, claiming to be one of the most enlightened and liberal nations of the world, after an experience of near three hundred years since the occurrence of the above precedents, to furnish a third equally striking and parallel example of results contingent on like causes, in the decay and almost annihilation of her merchant marine and ocean carrying trade,—a branch of her domestic industry which formerly, in importance, ranked second only to agriculture. It is proposed to tell, in the following pages, the story of this happening, and to endeavor to deduce from a record of sad and mortifying experience, what changes in federal statutes and national policy are essential to resuscitate and again make prosperous our shipping interest.

The narrative and arguments embodied in this volume were

originally prepared at the suggestion and request of W. H. Hurlburt, Esq., editor of "The New-York World," and first appeared in the columns of that journal, in the early part of 1881. As now presented, they have been carefully revised, and in great part re-written, and made to include the results of more recent experiences and continued investigations.

NORWICH, CONN., May, 1882.

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OUR MERCHANT MARINE.

CHAPTER I.

THE PERIOD OF DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY.

It is proposed to here ask the attention of the public to a popular but comprehensive exhibit of that department of American commerce and industry which is concerned in the business of transporting, through the medium of vessels, merchandise and passengers between the United States and foreign countries; its origin and development, its present condition and causes of decay, and its possible future.

The presentation and discussion of economic questions are not matters which for the last twenty-five or thirty years have found much favor with the masses of the American people. The problem of slavery, the war, and the political and social questions involved in the reconstruction of the Confederate States, have largely pre-occupied public attention during this period; while the resources of the country, the energies of our people, and their skill in the invention and application of machinery, have under ordinary conditions always and so easily