ones waited his coming—but nearer still to his spiritual vision was the 'house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' At last the bar was safely crossed, smooth water was reached, the engine slowed down, the *Mary Celeste* glided silently into the harbor, stopped her headway gradually, lay still, loosed her anchor chains, dropped her anchor, and as the last loud rattle of her cable ceased, the soul of John William Anderson took its 'flight to the undiscovered country.' "

NARRATIVES OF DISTINGUISHED BLOCKADE RUNNERS.

Capt. John Wilkinson, C. S. N.

One of the most intelligent and successful commanders in the blockade-running fleet was Capt. John Wilkinson, who entered the United States Navy as a midshipman in 1837, and, after an honorable and distinguished career, tendered his services to the Confederacy upon the secession of his native State, Virginia.

Having received a commission in the Confederate States Navy, he served in various responsible positions, and eventually was ordered upon special service in command of the Confederate States steamer *R. E. Lee.*

In his interesting book entitled *Narrative of a Blockade Runner,* with reference to the citizens of Virginia who resigned their commissions in the old service, he says: "They were compelled to choose whether they would aid in subjugating their State, or in defending it against invasion; for it was already evident that coercion would be used by the General Government, and that war was inevitable. In reply to the accusation of perjury in breaking their oath of allegiance, since brought against the officers of the army and navy who resigned their commissions to render aid to the South, it need only be stated that, in their belief, the resignation of their commissions absolved them from any special obligation. They then occupied the same position towards the government as other classes of citizens. But this charge was never brought against them until the war was ended. The resignation of their commissions was accepted when their purpose was well known. As to the charge of ingratitude, they reply their respective States had contributed their full share towards the expenses of the General Government, acting as their disbursing agent; and, when these

States withdrew from the Union, their citizens belonging to the two branches of the public service did not, and do not, consider themselves amenable to this charge for abandoning their official positions to cast their lot with their kindred and friends. But, yielding as they did to necessity, it was nevertheless a painful act to separate themselves from companions with whom they had been long and intimately associated, and from the flag under which they had been proud to serve."

With reference to his experience in blockade running at Wilmington, Captain Wilkinson writes:

"The natural advantages of Wilmington for blockade running were very great, owing chiefly to the fact that there were two separate and distinct approaches to Cape Fear River, *i. e.,* either by New Inlet to the north of Smith's Island, or by the Western Bar to the south of it. This island is ten or eleven miles in length; but the Frying Pan Shoals extend ten or twelve miles farther south, making the distance by sea between the two bars thirty miles or more, although the direct distance between them is only six or seven miles. From Smithville, a little village about equidistant from the two bars, both blockading fleets could be distinctly seen; and the outward-bound blockade runners could take their choice through which to run the gauntlet. The inward-bound blockade runners, too, were guided by circumstances of wind and weather, selecting that bar over which they would cross after they had passed the Gulf Stream, and shaping their course accordingly. The approaches to both bars were clear of danger, with the single exception of the 'Lump' before mentioned; and so regular are the soundings that the shore can be coasted for miles within a stone's throw of the breakers.

"These facts explain why the United States fleets were unable wholly to stop blockade running. It was, indeed, impossible to do so. The result to the very close of the war proves this assertion; for, in spite of the vigilance of the fleet, many blockade runners were afloat when Fort Fisher was captured. In fact, the passage through the fleet was little dreaded; for, although the blockade runner might receive a shot or two, she was rarely disabled; and, in proportion to the increase of the fleet, the greater we knew would be the danger of its vessels firing into each other. As the boys before the deluge used to say, they would be very apt to 'miss the cow and kill the calf.' The chief danger was upon the open sea, many of the light cruisers having