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No. V.

THE BRITISH NAVY IN HISTORY

BY

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To the boy or girl or youth of Canada the record of the British Navy should be one of the most attractive of all possible studies. The career of the British sailor, the course of a British ship, whether in war or peace, whether patrolling the seas in armed might or in peaceful mission sailing from port to port, touches all nations and races and conditions. The British Sailor meets with countless natural problems of earth and air, experiences every kind of climate, every condition of burning tropical heat or bitter arctic cold, views every sort of scene in beauty or ugliness, in storm or calm, comes into contact, from Said to Vladivostock, from Constantinople to the Horn, from New York to Calcutta, from Quebec to Melbourne, from Halifax to Liverpool, with all forms of humanity; he can prove all the problems of our vast Empire with its ownership of a quarter of the earth's surface, or 15,000,000 square miles, and its control (at present) of a third of the world's population, or 450 millions of people.

Such problems are too great for a child to consider seriously, too big for a youth to master; but even the fringe of them, the outlines of world conditions, the nature of the men and women of our day, the countless races and creeds, the vivid incidents and stirring events, which are met by the sailor or seaman as he traverses the world of waters, should prove a source of intense interest. The Canadian boy, in fact, who reads Marryatt, or Kingston, or Henty, or our own Macdonald Oxley, will find stories teeming with life, with all the attraction of sea-power, with all the brilliance of British annals.

The Navy is called the "Silent Service" because the destination and location of its great war-ships, cruisers, torpedo boats, destroyers, submarines, etc., are unknown to the public; because its officers never talk in public of naval tactics, policy or disposition of fleets; because the press does not discuss the distribution, number and quality of guns or armament or the action and availability of war-ships in general; because secrecy is essential to all details of the Service in time of war, and useful, as to many of them, in days of peace; because it has not been for many years a politically debatable subject—all Britain agreeing as to the vital need of a powerful, dominant