

# Progressive Changes in the Royal Navy?

(By Charles Gleig in Cassell's Magazine)

"Sailors, middies, admirals, are all changing under our eyes in obedience to the law of progress that rules alike the fate of fleets and of people. In coming days there may be even less roystering and junketing; ever increasing stress and effort. One can hardly foresee, as yet, the types destined to man and command our future fleets; but," contends the writer of the following article, "we are entitled to believe that something of the old roystering spirit may survive, though it may be less in evidence."

Not long since the present writer encountered in the High Street of Kensington an old shipmate who had recently retired upon a moderate pension. I had known him well twenty years previously as a jovial young surgeon of a gunboat on the China station; but now he was middle-aged, his once handsome face was not a little lined and battered, and he bore upon his visiting card the sonorous title: "Deputy Inspector-General of Hospitals and Fleets."

Aware that he had quitted the Service, I asked him presently whether he regretted his retirement. He stopped short, and gazing across the street with a far-away look in his eyes, replied, thoughtfully, "Often, as I lie upon my comfortable spring mattress, I dream that I'm waiting for a boat at the end of a cold, wet pier." I was answered. It was very plain that my friend the "D.I.G." had had his fill of seafaring and wet piers.

Now and again, it is true, you may chance upon a pensioned veteran in whose blood the call of the sea still echoes, who longs for employment, finds no enduring joy in spring mattresses, chafes at his moorings, and grumbles about the monotony of retirement. One has met such sturdy spirits, but they are rare; for the truth is, that the song of the sirens grows dim in the ears of middle-aged men, while the appeal of the club arm-chair is persistent and satisfying.

Stout Robert Blake was fifty years old when he began his unique career at sea, Columbus but five years younger when he sailed upon his great voyage of discovery, and Lord Howe was hard upon seventy on the "Glorious First of June." None the less, the appeal of the sea life is to the young, and on the lower deck especially, you will ever find the grey beard out of tune with his unwelcome environment, and growling for the solid comforts of dry land.

But, while the glamour of the naval life has always appealed to restless youth, one inclines to doubt whether the sirens sing as enticingly today as they did even thirty years ago. Thirty years is but a span in the long history of our navy, but great have been the changes in the mode of life afloat since the writer touched his cap to the quarter deck of a primitive ironclad launched in 1862. That good ship, a flagship in the Channel, was protected against the muzzle-loading guns of the day by four inches of soft iron. Her simple engines lent her a speed of ten knots, and these were quaintly supplemented (though no man held it quaint then) by three towering masts upon which could be spread a cloud of spotless canvas. The main-yard measured a hundred and five feet from yard-arm to yard-arm; but our highest speed under all plain sail was something under five knots!

Even then certain engineer officers held it childish to clap sail upon steam-driven ironclads, but nobody heeded their cautious sneers. The Admiralty clung to sails for some years after I went afloat in 1878, abandoning them at last with a strange reluctance, and amid the headshaking and lamentations of all the retired admirals and captains sheltered by the Service clubs. It was all too clear to those veterans that a mastless navy was going to the dogs.

I recall vividly my first glimpse of that Channel flagship. She lay in Portland Roads with five other masted anachronisms of the day, as I approached her in a waterman's boat laden with my sea-chest. The hour was 7.30 a.m., and at that moment five thousand men and officers stood motionless upon the upper decks of the battleships, awaiting the signal that should announce the morning "evolution."

Seventy years had passed since Trafalgar, but the grandsons of the Nelsonian era were still playing at the old sea-sport with an extraordinary enthusiasm. I crept aft unnoticed, and watched from beneath the poop the whole swift and amazing process of making full sail upon a fleet of steam-ironclads. The act was accomplished in about three minutes—three minutes of organized stampede and apparent confusion, and amid silence only broken by the clarion bellows of the commanders. Once, I remember, a bugle sounded. Something had gone wrong, and every man stood like a statue, while the little commander on the poop rebuked a small section of the crew. Two harsh notes from the bugle completed the brief homily, and instantly the wild stampede was resumed. When all was over, the towering masts clad with canvas, the crew, panting and sweating, fell in in double rank on both sides of the long unbroken deck, and a great silence fell upon the whole fleet. Day by day, and sometimes during three hours at a stretch, the crews of that period competed against each other in the performance of mast and sail drills which had for thirty years ceased to possess practical utility. We clung, you see, to the old seamanship that had made England glorious from the days of Drake; did our best

to forget the engines and boilers, and treated the engineers like pariah dogs.

I dwell upon this fetish of old-world seamanship because it so greatly influenced the mode of life afloat for thirty years after the Crimean War. We resisted beyond belief the inevitable change from sail to steam, trying desperately to preserve all manner of decayed institutions, manners, and customs, handed down from the era of wood and canvas. On a fair average we killed a man per week over those ancient exercises; but the mode of death was not inglorious, and the victims were buried with considerable ceremony. I well remember a fore-royal yardman of our ship who risked his life twice daily for the honor of the fore-topman, performing feats of agility that might have shaken the nerve of a baboon. In the end he perished, falling upon the foc'sle from a height of 150 feet. But the admiral attended the funeral, and we subscribed nearly fifty pounds for his mother, besides sending her a photograph of his tombstone.

The cult of old-fashioned seamanship hardened the muscles and nerves, and kept science at bay. The middies of that day were required by the regulations to study mathematics behind a canvas screen between the hours of 9.30 and 11.30 a.m., but we seldom averaged more than five hours' schooling per week, owing to the higher demands of the general education. Then, too, if your boat was called away, you shut your books with a light heart and eagerly assumed command of her. We lived a great deal in the boats when the ship lay in harbor, and few of the senior officers took our mathematics seriously. A few gunnery and torpedo lieutenants who have since risen high in the Service were conspicuous, even in those days, by their studious habits, or their grip upon science; but not a few captains distrusted them and privately condemned them as "X chasing muffs," hardly to be entrusted in foul weather with the reefing of a topsail.

There are flag officers and captains now serving who went through this mill of "fool" seamanship without discovering its futility; but it must be difficult for the present day commanders and lieutenants to realize that the British Navy was shifting topsails and running the whole gamut of Nelsonian seamanship less than thirty years ago. High credit is all the more due to admirals and captains who have adapted themselves, chameleon-wise, to the sweeping changes of the past three decades.

## Crank of All Ages

I never knew until I became a regular newspaper seller one day in every week how many people there are in the world bent on reforming it. You do not discover this so long as you merely sell papers in a spasmodic and amateurish manner, appearing now and then at the edge of the pavement with a bundle of newspapers and going off to tea as soon as trade grows slack. Any element of poverty at once gives an air of detachment to the amateur and keeps the world from really making friends with her. But as soon as the passer-by grasps that she is a fixture, just as much so as the seller of pink football news or of green politics except that she is kept supplied with papers by a purple, white, and green cart instead of by a panting boy on a bicycle, then every kind of crank who is out for an airing thinks she is there to listen to his views on any conceivable subject from vivisection to food reform.

You divide the world into three kinds of people, roughly speaking, when you sell papers as a professional and not as an amateur. There is the person who wants to buy a paper. There is the person who wants to know where the nearest tea shop is, or which omnibus goes to the Circus, or whether you have seen someone in a grey frock and a pink hat with wings. That person makes you feel like a real newspaper boy at a street corner. Later there is the crank, who merely wants to talk. The crank, of course, never troubles the ordinary newsreader, for there is just this difference between the seller of suffrage papers and the others who share the edge of the pavement with her: she does represent an attempt to reform the world as well as an attempt to sell papers. So her pitch is a common meeting-ground for cranks.

If it is true that the character of an age is to be found in the character of its cranks, the period we are passing through will present extraordinary difficulties to the chronicler of the future. That is the worst of living at a time when most of the big things have been established in theory, though some still remain to be established in fact. It was quite easy to be a crank with distinction when people were tortured for saying the world was round. Now you have to fall back on bird millinery or the Swedish system or a whole host of minor movements to educate public opinion, and the real crank has a hard struggle for existence. Personally, standing as I believe for one of the few big things that still have to be fought for because they are not yet established in fact, I have always felt inclined to look upon these lesser attempts to reform humanity as fads. But I find from standing at the edge of the pavement that the hallmark of every crank is a firm belief that all the other cranks are faddists.

"No," said the tailor-made lady with firm-

ness, as she prepared to pass by after reading my newswall. "I have no time for fads. Before I married, when I earned my own living and paid rates and taxes, I quite believed in this sort of thing. In fact, I never condemn any woman for wanting a vote. Her impressive air as she said this seemed to suggest that she expected praise for showing so much generosity and self-restraint. I said something inane about helping others, and she looked injured. "Naturally, I do not mean that I am idle," she said. "Sport, that is my strong point—outdoor sport."

I suppose my air hinted that this did not quite fill my conception of human usefulness, for she added hastily, "and charity." Sport and charity—that is my life. "You would find scope for both in selling our paper," I said. I gathered from the way she walked off that she did not agree with me. "Ah!" said the elderly gentleman, who excused himself for buying a paper from me by saying it was for his wife, who was "quite foolish about the question"—"the great mistake you ladies make is in not concentrating upon an educational franchise test. You'd have many more people on your side if you didn't want to flood the electorate with uneducated." An interruption occurred here, while the conductor of a waiting omnibus whistled to me for a paper and gave me his confidential opinion that we were "going to get it soon." The elderly gentleman turned triumphantly to my nearest companion in the gutter. "There! What did I say? They're all Socialists," he grumbled as he went off. The newsboy gave me a friendly wink. "Chronic, ain't it?" he remarked. Everything, by the way, is "chronic" to my comrades at the edge of the pavement; and I have some difficulty in not letting the expression, whatever it may mean, creep into my own vocabulary.

The temperance reformer was more difficult to get rid of, because he was so desperately in earnest. It was no use pointing out to him that we were both traveling the same road, really. His was the one and only scheme for regenerating mankind, and women who wanted the power to help him were wilfully obstructing his path. "Local option!" he said with enthusiasm, describing circles on the pavement with his umbrella and keeping all customers at a distance. "Local option! That's the ticket. Votes for women, indeed!" I said mildly that I supposed the reform of the goose was always a fad to the gander. "Of course," I added hurriedly, seeing he looked offended. "I know I am the goose." He still looked offended, but the remark put him to flight after spoiling the newspaper trade at our corner for at least five minutes.

The most determined instance of the crank who sees all the rest of the world as faddists or worse, is, I think, the animal-lover. Perhaps I am a little prejudiced owing to my encounter with the old lady, the toy dog and the Cruelty-to-pet-animals Christmas card. She arrived breathless on the kerb at my side, placed there by a policeman, while criticism of the toy dog rained plentifully from a brewer's dray, a bicycle, and a taxicab, all of which were mixed up in the road through their noble endeavors not to annihilate the yapping creature. I came into the situation because I unwound its chain, which had tied itself round the old lady's skirt, and placed the thing on her ermine muff. I received no acknowledgment of my services—first, because I picked him up by his head, seeing nothing else large enough to afford one a grip, and, secondly, because she discovered I was a suffragist.

"You ought to be locked up in a lunatic asylum," she said sternly. For a moment I did not see the connection. Then I made allowances for her age and the peril she had just gone through, and said, "Oh, no!" as soothingly as I could. She put the toy dog with some difficulty inside her muff, tail first, which I felt was a punishment it did not deserve, even if it had dislocated the traffic. "When the world is full of tortured, suffering animals!" she continued, still looking at my news bill. I could not but wish that dumbness had been one of the disabilities of the particular tortured animal she was trying to back into a hot ermine muff, for when I tried to say that the one thing I objected to in dumb animals was the fact that they were never dumb, my remarks were drowned in its piercing yelp.

At the end of ten minutes I had learnt every detail of her private society for protecting pampered pets against those who pampered them—this, by the way, was not what she called it—and of the children who paid a penny weekly, and of the Christmas card she had designed herself. The Christmas card was ex- tricated from the ermine muff, not without difficulty, for the toy dog made a determined effort to emerge with it, and my opinion was condescendingly asked. It is not easy to give an opinion on a drawing of a cat, a dog, a monkey, a parrot, a tadpole, a pony, a donkey, and newt, and I said quite the wrong thing when murmured it was very pretty. Pettiness, I was told, was not its object; so I added, in desperation, that she had forgotten the rabbit. She thought she could squeeze in a rabbit between the Newfoundland dog and the newt; and after that I routed her by persistently forcing my own goods upon her.

It is pleasant to remind yourself, when you are the crank who stands on the edge of the pavement selling suffrage papers, that cranks are the salt of the earth. But, as Henry Harland once wrote in a frivolous moment, "Il faut souffrir pour être sel."—Evelyn Sharp, in the Manchester Guardian.

It has been cut down, so that officers and men spend the bulk of their time in Home waters, and no small part of it in barracks. To the younger men this is no boon; it is even more monotonous, and it is assuredly more expensive. Before German competition obliged us to concentrate in Home waters, naval men used to sigh for home billets; now, with the usual "cussedness" of human nature, they have too much of "Home, Sweet Home," and long for the sight of a cocoa-nut tree—the smell of a foreign port. In the merry days of foreign service, when one saw the flagship once or twice in a year at most, Jack and a few of his officers usually contrived to bank a tidy sum of money against the glad day of paying off at home. True, there was no prize-money, and there were often "duns" to be pacified at Portsmouth and Plymouth; but there was usually enough over to set the pretty sweet-hearts and wives.

"A trip, trip, tripping on the Quay," and to ensure the wanderers a tender welcome home.

In the course of a long commission an A.B. of my acquaintance stored £120 in the Admiralty Savings Bank, the secret being that he owned a sewing machine and turned out caps that were the admiration of the ship's company. One may admit that the average officer did not return with any balance worth mentioning, but he did at least contrive to reduce the long bill of the patient out-fitter of the Common-Hard or Devonport. Three months in old England was quite long enough to tax the nerve of one's banker—then off again to China or the Pacific, before credit was wholly exhausted. And, after all, old England can be quite dull when the balance runs dry and kindly unctions have been completely tapped. Married men grumbled at the too short spells of home service—one has to admit that—but the active life is, in the main, a youthful force; and the sailor who marries under thirty hardly deserves to be considered. Today, I am told, there is too much home service, even to please the "bundle-men." One wonders what the wives think about it. But they are hardly likely to be quite candid. There is a certain dreary anchorage, termed, I believe, "Cats' Hole," where reserve battleships and cruisers of the Home Fleet swing monotonously at their moorings during many months of the year. "Cats' Hole" (if I have the name correctly) is situated near the rich mud-flats of the Medway, and about three miles from

everything else. It is not, I am told, a popular anchorage, so that strenuous fleet-cruising comes as an exciting relief to those "nucleus" crews who normally pace the decks, watching the golden haze of afternoon lighting up the purple mud. True, you may also watch the barges tacking with the tide, and exchange marine compliments with the gifted bargees. But even that diversion has been known to pall. "Give me the West Coast and a little shooting over a 'nucleus' crew lieutenant whom I lately met on Sheerness pier. Life is much pleasanter, no doubt, at most of the Home ports and barracks, but there is no detached service and the fleets are constantly cruising or drilling. Rightly so, of course, for our navy is strenuously making ready, and takes its work very seriously. My point is, that the life is necessarily less jolly and varied than formerly, but one expects the increased energy and zeal everywhere manifest in the British navy of today.

Take, for instance, gunnery. Everybody knows, or should know, what gunnery means now in our navy; how the example of one distinguished expert, whose name has become a household word throughout the Empire, fanned into a steady blaze the slumbering enthusiasm of the whole Service. This awakening of our navy to the value of straight and rapid shooting constitutes by far the most striking change that has occurred for half a century. The new skill involves a great deal of hard work and intelligence, both of which were formerly expended upon "fool" seamanship and the polishing of brass. As one looks back it appears amazing that bad shooting was accepted as a matter of course only a few years ago. The guns were good of their kind, but the quarterly practice enforced by regulations was universally regarded as a nuisance. We fired at a small red flag attached to a pole embedded in a rum cask. Steaming round this almost invisible target, the range varying between 1,000 and 1,400 yards, it was only now and again that the gun captains obtained a clear glimpse of the little red flag rising and falling with the ocean swell. They had to watch for it through a narrow gun-port, across which drifted the smoke from other guns on the broadside. Actual hits were not encouraged, for the shattering of the rum-cask involved delay and the dropping of a fresh target. Rapidity of fire was the main objective, because everybody, except the gunnery lieutenant, regarded the practice as a noisy nuisance. When a gunner pitched his shot conspicuously short of the bobbing mark, he was mildly reproved, but shots that passed 200 feet over the target provoked no comment. The present writer never saw powder and shot thrown overboard to expedite the practice, but some of his contemporaries are known to have witnessed that amazing abuse of Government stores.

Last summer, when the fleets were manoeuvring off the Scottish coast, I visited a new battleship anchored below the Forth Bridge. The manoeuvres were ended, the work of the day completed; but, from the captain downwards, every man I saw looked jaded or worried, and a dismal silence enveloped the vessel. A solemn-faced, pallid, scientific midshipman politely acted as my guide. He seemed to be on his guard, apprehensive that he might reveal some official secret. I could not help contrasting that solemn youth with the jolly middle of thirty years ago, who took such keen delight in gulling civilian visitors.

Later, I was received by the captain in a wretched cabin full of ventilating shafts. He was civil, but much pre-occupied, and had the air of a man harassed by responsibilities—as, no doubt, he was.

Twenty years ago the captain of a warship had no worries, and responsibility sat lightly upon his broad shoulders. At sea he enjoyed ample leisure; in port, he landed daily and dined well at the club or with his brother captains, leaving the commander to run the ship. One does not suggest that the old leisure days can or should be restored to officers of the navy; but the public scarcely appreciates how strenuous and exacting life in our fleet has grown. So great, indeed, has the navy life changed within thirty years, that we may soon look to find the fleet manned and officered by a new race of engineering mariners. Already one may note the beginning of the transformation of the personnel, although we are liable to be deluded by the sight of some isolated roystering Tar still maintaining the old traditions of the cloth. Regret it as we may, the roystering Tar is passing, and his officers are equally adapting themselves to the imperious demands of an age of science. But, of course, we ought not to regret evolution; and all that the modern navy can hope to preserve is a few traditions of the grand old Service. The sailor-engineer is not only "knocking at the door," but has already thrust his experimental foot in to the gun-room and the mess-deck.

Sailors, middies, admirals, are all changing under our eyes in obedience to the law of progress that rules alike the fate of fleets and of people. In the coming days there may be even less roystering and junketing; ever increasing stress and effort. One can hardly foresee, as yet, the types destined to man and command our future fleets; but we are entitled to believe that something of the old roystering spirit may survive, though it may be less in evidence.

The call of the sea is already pitched in a new key; the sirens chant a new song to engineer-sailors of the Dreadnought era.

### NOTICE.

Seattle Mineral Claim, situate in the Quatsino Mining Division of Rupert District, Located at West Arm of Quatsino Sound.

Lot No. 260.  
TAKE NOTICE that James A. Moore, Free Miner's Certificate No. B13876, intends, sixty days from date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for a Certificate of Improvements, for the purpose of obtaining a Crown Grant of the above claim.  
And further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such Certificate of Improvements.  
Dated this 10th day of September, A.D. 1909.  
R. C. PRICE, Agent.

### NOTICE.

R. C. P. No. 10 Mineral Claim, situate in the Quatsino Mining Division of Rupert District, Located at West Arm of Quatsino Sound.

Lot No. 282.  
TAKE NOTICE that James A. Moore, Free Miner's Certificate No. B13876, intends, sixty days from date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for a Certificate of Improvements, for the purpose of obtaining a Crown Grant of the above claim.  
And further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such Certificate of Improvements.  
Dated this 10th day of September, A.D. 1909.  
R. C. PRICE, Agent.

### NOTICE.

R. C. P. No. 11 Mineral Claim, situate in the Quatsino Mining Division of Rupert District, Located at West Arm of Quatsino Sound.

Lot No. 284.  
TAKE NOTICE that James A. Moore, Free Miner's Certificate No. B13876, intends, sixty days from date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for a Certificate of Improvements, for the purpose of obtaining a Crown Grant of the above claim.  
And further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such Certificate of Improvements.  
Dated this 10th day of September, A.D. 1909.  
R. C. PRICE, Agent.

### NOTICE.

R. C. P. No. 12 Mineral Claim, situate in the Quatsino Mining Division of Rupert District, Located at West Arm of Quatsino Sound.

Lot No. 284.  
TAKE NOTICE that James A. Moore, Free Miner's Certificate No. B13876, intends, sixty days from date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for a Certificate of Improvements, for the purpose of obtaining a Crown Grant of the above claim.  
And further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such Certificate of Improvements.  
Dated this 10th day of September, A.D. 1909.  
R. C. PRICE, Agent.

### NOTICE.

Eagle No. 7 Mineral Claim, situate in the Quatsino Mining Division of Rupert District, Located at West Arm of Quatsino Sound.

Lot No. 292.  
TAKE NOTICE that James A. Moore, Free Miner's Certificate No. B13876, intends, sixty days from date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for a Certificate of Improvements, for the purpose of obtaining a Crown Grant of the above claim.  
And further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such Certificate of Improvements.  
Dated this 10th day of September, A.D. 1909.  
R. C. PRICE, Agent.

### NOTICE.

Eagle No. 8 Mineral Claim, situate in the Quatsino Mining Division of Rupert District, Located at West Arm of Quatsino Sound.

Lot No. 298.  
TAKE NOTICE that James A. Moore, Free Miner's Certificate No. B13876, intends, sixty days from date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for a Certificate of Improvements, for the purpose of obtaining a Crown Grant of the above claim.  
And further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such Certificate of Improvements.  
Dated this 10th day of September, A.D. 1909.  
R. C. PRICE, Agent.

### NOTICE.

Seattle No. 1 Mineral Claim, situate in the Quatsino Mining Division of Rupert District, Located at West Arm of Quatsino Sound.

Lot No. 287.  
TAKE NOTICE that James A. Moore, Free Miner's Certificate No. B13876, intends, sixty days from date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for a Certificate of Improvements, for the purpose of obtaining a Crown Grant of the above claim.  
And further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such Certificate of Improvements.  
Dated this 10th day of September, A.D. 1909.  
R. C. PRICE, Agent.

### NOTICE.

Seattle No. 2 Mineral Claim, situate in the Quatsino Mining Division of Rupert District, Located at West Arm of Quatsino Sound.

Lot No. 287.  
TAKE NOTICE that James A. Moore, Free Miner's Certificate No. B13876, intends, sixty days from date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for a Certificate of Improvements, for the purpose of obtaining a Crown Grant of the above claim.  
And further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such Certificate of Improvements.  
Dated this 10th day of September, A.D. 1909.  
R. C. PRICE, Agent.

### NOTICE.

Seattle No. 3 Mineral Claim, situate in the Quatsino Mining Division of Rupert District, Located at West Arm of Quatsino Sound.

Lot No. 287.  
TAKE NOTICE that James A. Moore, Free Miner's Certificate No. B13876, intends, sixty days from date hereof, to apply to the Mining Recorder for a Certificate of Improvements, for the purpose of obtaining a Crown Grant of the above claim.  
And further take notice that action, under section 37, must be commenced before the issuance of such Certificate of Improvements.  
Dated this 10th day of September, A.D. 1909.  
R. C. PRICE, Agent.