

fog is very thick in a harbour, or the clouds are right down to the water, we land outside and taxi in, just as we used to do.

"Remember Queenie's night-landing gadget? It put a boat down on the water automatically. You let a lever hang down over the side, shut off your engines, glided down, and when the tip of the lever touched the water it pulled back the controls and the boat landed smoothly. We use an adaptation of the gadget to-day.

"Cost? You may be surprised to know that our two boats running the U.S. Mail just pay their way and no more—even with the Government subsidy. Our company runs smaller boats, ten thousand horse-power, down through the Mediterranean, to Australia, and in various places all over the world. They pay, but the big ones don't make money yet. They will in time.

"And now let us yarn about the old days."

So we yarned about Felixstowe, and the six-ton boats and the pilots, until he had to go to the control cockpit to relieve the First Mate.

"Like to come up before you turn in?" he asked.

We went up together. It was pitch dark outside. The control cockpit was lit only by the light in the binnacle and the Wireless Navigator.

"What happens about looking out from your glass-house when it rains or snows?" I asked.

"At our speed rain and snow won't stick to the streamlined glass," he replied. And then to the Quartermaster, a new man, for the first one had been relieved, "Put me through to the *Swallow*."

When the Quartermaster shut down a switch, he said, "Hullo, Morrison. Going strong. What's your position?"

A rich, jovial voice at my elbow answered:—

"Good evening, Pank. Have you come for the ashes?" This was evidently some obscure joke, for the two Skippers laughed heartily together. And Pank asked: "How's the Missus and the kids?" Then Morrison gave his position.

"That's our sister ship, east-bound," Pank said to me. "Keep a sharp look-out over our port bow and you'll see her lights. She'll pass in a moment."

I looked out into the darkness and caught a momentary glimpse of a bright white light and a red one. They were gone in a flash.

"That's her," said Pank.

I went below to my cabin and turned in. The next thing I remembered was a steward standing at my elbow with a cup of tea.

"Where are we now?" I asked.