

# MASSEY'S MAGAZINE

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## *The* British Navy *to-day.*

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*Illustrations by L. R. O'Brien, R. C. A.*

"The fleet of England is her all in all,  
Her fleet is in your hands,  
And in her fleet, her fate."

*Tennyson.*

**I**N the breasts of the British people the world over to-day these lines of the late poet laureate will touch a responsive chord, and in very many minds should their prophetic significance raise questions which might trouble the British conscience. All who have been following the trend of recent events in both hemispheres must realize that the time is approaching, even if now it is not at our very doors, when the empire whose drumbeat encircles the world will have to fight for its existence. From our infancy we have heard the familiar

strain of "Britannia Rules the Waves," and somehow we have come to regard it as perfectly right, and in the natural order of things that Britannia should continue to rule the waves without troubling ourselves further about the matter. The stability of that gigantic Imperial Arch, whose keystone is the British Navy, has caused us little or no uneasiness. Suddenly, however, we find that a lively interest has been awakened in the forces at the command of Britannia.

In this view it is my object to present to the readers of this magazine in as concise a form as possible an outline of Britain's naval force. The illustrations which accompany this article show some of the types of the British fleet; it may be said they represent the most important types, having regard to its probable functions, as a whole, in time of war. Students of the science of naval warfare are indebted to Captain A. T. Mahan, of the United States Navy, for bringing out clearly in his able work, "The Influence of Sea Power upon History," the fact that, although modern science has

\* The frontispiece is from a water color sketch made by Mr. O'Brien in 1883, of old line-of-battle ships laid up at Plymouth—veterans of the last great naval wars in which England was engaged. The white ship portrayed in the middle of the picture was the last built of the great three-deckers, carrying 120 guns. The black ship shown on the right was the *Canopus*, a fine two-decker, captured from the French and added to the English Navy like many others. [EDITOR.]