A SEAMAN OF NELSON'S TIME

Mariner of England; an Account of the Career of
William Richardson, from Cabin Boy in the Merchant Service to Warrant Officer in the Royal
Navy (1780 to 1819), as told by himself. Edited
by Colonel Spencer Childers, C.B.

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F the navy in Nelson's day a vast amount has been written, but it is for the most part either in the prosaic strain of official despatches or a variation on the rhetoric of Campbell's poetry, says the Belfast Whig.

We know a good deal about the victories we know all too little about the men who won them. Marryat in his novels, Jack Mitford in "Johnny Newcome in the Navy," and a few others have painted fascinating pictures of an officer's life, but the lower deck has not been able to claim its "vates sacer." Life there did not make for the production of literature; men whose only privacy was the fourteen inches sleeping room allowed to each hammock, who were driven from dawn till midnight by the bosun and his starters, had neither the opportunity to set down great thoughts nor the time to think them. To the majority it was a hard life, and a harder death, but there were some who rose superior to their fate, and amongst these was William Richardson, whose reminiscences, ably edited by Colonel Spencer Childers, fill a gap in the naval history of the past, and show us how war appeared to the men who fought the big guns under Nelson and his captains.

Richardson came of a seafaring stock; his father had been at the taking of Havana, and in his later days commanded a ship engaged in the Russian trade, while all the author's four brothers saw service in the navy. He began early with trips on his father's boat from Shields to London, then as an apprentice he sailed to the Baltic, to Archangel, and to Barbary. Tired of life on a collier, he joined in 1790 as fourth mate a ship called the Spy, which was said to be bound on a voyage of discovery, but he soon found out her real object was slave trading on the Guinea coast. He professes dislike of the work, but on the whole he takes it very philosophically, and one has an idea that his horror of it was not as great as he would have us believe. There was naturally rough work on the coast, and he gives a life-like picture of a mutiny on a French slaver which a detachment of his crew

a man, he adds-

"Our work was not yet done, for the slaves below were in a mutiny, knocking off their irons as fast as they could, but our captain. who had probably experienced such work, before, knew how to manage them with the least danger to us. Seeing an old sail dock, he ordered us to cover the gratings with it, and then knock the scuttles in close on each side of the ship to prevent the air from getting in to the 'tween decks to the slaves; this done, we loaded our muskets with powder, but instead of shot we filled the barrels with cayenne pepper, which is plentiful here, then fired them off through the gratings into the 'tween decks, and in a few minutes there was stench enough from the burning pepper to almost suffocate them. This was the finishing blow. They called out for mercy, which was granted, and the sail was taken away, the scuttles opened, and the slaves let up two at a time and properly secured."

On his return from the expedition Richardson was captured by the press-gang, but discharged after a short time, faring better than in his second adventure of the kind when seized at Calcutta in 1793. His views on the pressgang are strikingly like those of Voltaire, but he took his own hard lot with great equanimity. He had been trained in a tough school, and could lay claim to the qualities of a true bluejacket, "with every hair a rope-yarn, every tooth a marlin spike, every finger a fish hook, and his blood right good Stockholm tar." Yet even an optimistic temperament might have been dashed at the situation in which he found

"All my clothes were on my back, and with an old silver watch and one rupee . . ., had now, as it were, the world to begin again. and a poor prospect I had before me. I had no bed, neither did I care for any, for my bones had got so hardened since I came to sea that I could sleep as comfortably on a chest lid or on the deck as on the best bed in the ship, and, having only one shirt, I went without when I had to wash and dry it."

A man of that stamp was a welcome find to officers called on to drive seamanship into the heads of pressed "lord mayor's men," or

who worked with the bosun's rattan as a stimulus. He was made a topman, then captain of the maintop, and inside four years received his warrant as a gunner. He had his fill of the hard work that fell to the lot of the British bluejacket during the revolutionary wars, and learned by sad experience what it meant to shepherd a straggling convoy in Atlantic gales, to chase French and Spanish privateers, to engage in cutting-out expeditions, to be cheated by rascally prize agents, to have his gums swell over his teeth with scurvy, and to go through a fever epidemic in the West Indies that killed so many of the crew that not enough ablebodied men were left on board to heave her stern round to the wind "that the sea breeze might blow through her." Through it all his cheerfulness never deserts him, and those who base their ideas of the sailor of that period on the grog-swilling, cutlass-waving ruffian of melodrama might study his pages with profit.

His comments on the great event's happening about him are shrewd and to the point. He was a caustic critic of naval administration. and throughout his whole career protested against the brutal system of flogging that was then part of the everyday routine on board the navy. A callous subject who had often received what the sailors used to call "a red-checked shirt" at the gangway has left it on record that it was nothing but an O and a few O my Gods, and then you can put on your coat"; but Richardson takes a more serious view, and states he had always found seamen grateful for good usage, and "whenever I hear of a mutiny in a ship I am much of the opinion of Admiral Lord Collingwood, who said it must be assuredly the fault of the captain or his of-

Captains in the eighteenth century wielded a power that few men were fit to be trusted with, and, though Richardson escaped such tyrants as Pigot of the Hermione, who made a practice of flogging the last topman down, he had some very cranky subjects to deal with. One young gentleman, made a post captain by influence at nineteen, endeavored to instil sanctity by a penalty of eight lashes for an thanks for his pains, while the commissioned oath! another prefaced every punishment by a ranks reaped a rich reward. speech to the men, telling them that when the "Such (he adds) is the e

say, "don't we know that as well as himself?" Perhaps the most curious personality he served under was Sir Richard Strachan. Richardson was gunner aboard his flagship the Caesar at the big fight in the Bay that ended in the capture of four French ships of the line that had managed to escape from Trafalgar, and he has left us a graphic narrative of the encounter. It was a grim bit of work, the French fighting till their two seventy-fours were totally dismasted and their eighty-fours had only fore and mizzen masts standing, their total of killed and wounded running up to well over 700. A human touch is added to the account Richardson's description of two powdermonkeys who had a dispute over a cartridge in the thick of the action, and promptly settled the matter by a boxing match while the French broadsides were banging into the ship. It is an illuminating comment on Admiralty methods that medals for this action were not presented till forty-four years after it was fought.

"Mad Dick," as Strachan was called in the fleet, read the prayers himself to the ship's company after the battle. The effect was rather spoiled, however, when he denounced them a few hours later as "damned mutinous rascals," and the bluejackets summed him up epigramatically by saying "when he swore he meant no harm, and when he prayed he meant no good." He was certainly an autocratic old gentleman, as his summary method of keeping a convoy from straggling by firing shotted guns at them would prove. He threatened the same high-handed course with vessels of his own fleet for failing to keep station, and on one occasion ordered Richardson to fire into the St. George by way of impressing on her the necessity of sticking to her place in the line. Keeping station is still a trial on the navy, but the modern admiral would hardly venture to school his captains with live shell.

Richardson served with Stopford on board the Caesar at the Basque Roads when that erratic genine Cochrane went in to burn out the French ships. He had a great deal to do with the fitting out of the fireships, but got little

"Such (he adds) is the encouragement that

warrant officers meet with in the navy. If an action is fought, though they have the princi pal duty to do in it, they are seldom mentioned in the captain's letter; while the purser, doctor, and boys of midshipmen are greatly applauded though some of them were no more use in the ship at the time than old women."

That was a quite legitimate grumble, for between the commissioned and warrant ranks there was a great gulf fixed, a hint of which may be gleaned from old Sir Peter Parker's address to his seamen :- "By the god of war I'll make you touch your hats to a midshipman's coat if it's only hung on a broomstick to dry." Though he might growl, Richardson enjoyed his life in the navy to the full, and the best proof of this is his manly and inspiring book. In spite of salt junk and weevily biscuits, and the hardships of close on forty years at sea, Richardson lived to make old bones. dying at last at the patriarchal age of ninetyseven, and, luckier than most of his comrades, he has left behind him in these pages an enduring memorial.

RICH FARMERS IN MIDDLE WEST

The farmers of the Central and Western States have, says a writer in the Springfield Republican, devoted their attention largely to stock raising, and it is that class of men who have accumulated the most money. There are plenty of stock raisers in Illinois who are rated at over \$100,000, and even out in Kansas, where hogs, cattle, and alfalfa are making farmers rich, there are many farmers who own estates and bank accounts to the extent of from \$50,000 to \$100,000. These farmers have several good advantages. They have cheap, rich lands, have long summer seasons, and are close to large stock markets. When good, rich lands can be secured for from \$12 to \$50 per acre (according to the improvements), it is easy to understand how farmers can do business on a large scale, and make money. It was only recently that the writer saw an account of a stockman shipping a train load of choice fat beeves to market, which averaged him \$8 per hundredweight, and brought him the handsome sum of about \$20,000 for the shipment. They were alfalfa and corn-fed stock, the best that feed could make.

Policy of the Navy League



E have received from the Navy League, says the London Standard, a copy of the following resolutions, which define the policy of the league as approved by the Executive committee:-

1. To draw attention to the fact that no member of the government has yet pledged himself to the two-power standard as meaning a 10 per cent, margin above the two strongest nowers in large armored shins. It should the object of the Navy League to draw from the government a clear statement of the standard they are working to (a) in order that the public may judge if the standard is adequate; (b) in order that we may see if the standard is being adhered to in practice.

2. That it is inadvisable for the British Navy to have a lower standard as to the period at which battleships, cruisers, and destroyers fall obsolete than that of its principal naval rival.

3. That the government should take into its serious and immediate consideration the large number of protected cruisers and torpedo craft which are falling obsolete, especially if the German standard of obsolescence is used, and should include in their future programme adequate provision to replace them.

4. That it is misleading to include in the Dilke return a number of vessels which are not being maintained, and which are not available until some time after war breaks out. (The Dilke return is the only annual return given to parliament and the public.)

5. That our requirements should be worked out as near as possible for a period of four years, and regular programmes entered upon, so as to enable contracts to be placed better, more regular employment given, and standardisation of ships and stores obtained.

6. To bring pressure to bear upon the front Opposition bench to obtain a day for discussion of the shipbuilding policy of the government during the autumn session. The Navy League desires to draw attention to the unwisdom of relying on superior rapidity of building, in view of such examples of ships not yet in commission as H.M.S. Defence and H.M.S. Lord Nelson, of the year 1904 programme, and the armored cruiser Invincible, which ought to have joined the Home fleet in May and will not be in commission this year. The destroyers H.M.S. Afridi and H.M.S. Cossack, belonging to 1906 programme, have not yet done their trials. That the Navy League, while recognizing that it has not sufficient evidence at its disposal in reference to the very large reduction in the votes in recent years both for army and navy, for guns, projectiles, ammunition, torpedoes, and gun-cotton, desires to draw attention to these large reductions, and to the desirability of parliament being furnished with an explanation.

7. That the Navy League should call attention to the failure of the Admiralty to carry out their policy as to the number of ships away from any of the fleets at any one time, and of the memorandum of October 23, 1906, that in the event of a ship requiring an extensive refit (defined as over 30 working days in a previous memorandum), she should be replaced by a ship from the Home fleet.

The following are copies of memoranda reed to in paragraph 7:-

In December, 1904, an official circular was issued to all ships stating that "Not more than two battleships are to be absent at any one time from the Channel fleet for the purpose of refit or of visiting their home port for leave. .

. such refit is to be governed by the condition that these ships are to be ready for sea in cases of emergency at four days' notice, unless their lordships' special permission is obtained for any longer period, when the desirability of turning over the crew to another vessel will be considered, and it will be carried out if the refit will take more 'than 30 working days. The same procedure is to be adopted with regard to armored cruisers. Not more than one at a time is to be detached from any squadron for refit."

In a memorandum entitled "Arrangements consequent upon the Redistribution of the Fleet," issued on March 15, 1906 (No. 2430), the following appeared:—"Orders have been given that, as a rule, not more than one large armored vessel of a fleet or squadron is to be under repair in dockyard hands at one time, so as to ensure the various fleets and squadrons being kept always at their-effective strength and ready for instant service."

In the memorandum of October 23, 1906, it was again stated that: "Any vessel in the three sea-going fleets requiring an extensive refit will be replaced temporarily by a ship of the Home Fleet." (An extensive refit in a previous memorandum was defined as more than

30 working days.) On November 30, 1905, the Admiralty issued a memorandum calling attention to the fact that the Channel Fleet consisted of 17 battleships and 6 armored cruisers, the Atlantic of 8 battleships and 6 armored cruisers, and the Mediterranean of 8 battleships and 4 armored cruisers, and stated as follows: "Refits.-The following procedure with regard to refits has been adopted: each ship in commission will be in dockyard hands for a period not exceeding 40 days a year. Not more than three battleships are to be absent at any one time from the battleships of the Channel Fleet for the purpose of refit or of visiting their home port for leave purposes, and only one battleship at a time from the other battle fleets. Such refit is to be governed by the condition that these ships are to be ready for sea if called upon at four days' notice, unless permission is

specially obtained for any longer period from

the First Sea Lord, who is the member of the board primarily responsible for the fighting efficiency of the fleet and its instant readiness for war; in this case the desirability of turning over the crew to another vessel will be considered by him. The same procedure is adopted with regard to armored cruisers, not more than one at a time being detached from any fleet or squadron.'

On October, 23, 1906, the circular was issued distributing the fleet into the Channel Fleet of 12 battleships, and the Nore Division of the Home Fleet, Atlantic and Mediterranean Fleets, each of six battleships, and intimating that more vigorous conditions would obtain.

REINFORCED CONCRETE BRIDGE

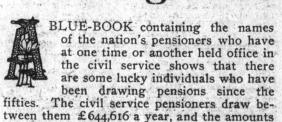
The highway bridge aross the Wabash river southwest of Huntington, Indiana, was replaced in 1907 by a reinforced concrete bridge of two spans of 105 feet each. Each span consists of a slightly distorted arch having a rise from abutment springing of crown of eighteen feet. The springings at pier, however, are four feet higher, making the rise for the half of arch adjacent the pier fourteen feet. The footings are in hard pan at a depth of four feet below the river bed, one abutment backing against the old stone abutment of the former wooden bridge. This abutment is shortened to twelve feet, while the other has a base of twenty-two feet. The pier is six feet thick at springings and seven feet at base, the pressure on its foundations exceeding nine tons per square foot with no indications of settlement.

The bridge contains 850 cubic yards of concrete and seven and a half tons of 3-4-in. steel rods for reinforcing.-Cement Age, New York.

The Journal de Geneve relates the history. of one of Senor Sarasate's most valuable violins. It was the property in the years gone by of a Genevan blacksmith whose forge was in the Corraterie. A traveller who could not otherwise pay for the shoeing of his horse had left with him in liquidation of the debt. The blacksmith attached no value to it. He had only accepted it because he could obtain payment for his professional services in no other form; and he hung it up on the wall and thought no more of it until the arrival, many years afterwards, of another horseman, M. Boissier, who was also a violinist and a collector of violins. He asked M. Boissier to buy the instrument from him at his own price or else to find him a purchaser. M. Boissier carried it away, scraped off the smoke, discovered the Stradivarius mark-and did not defraud the blacksmith. On his death it was sold to the Parisian dealers Gaud & Bernardel, from whom Sarasate acquired it.

The city of Huddersfield has municipal ownership of tramways. Last year there was a net surplus of \$31,700. The population of the city is about 100,000.

Distinguished Pensioners



vary from the £1,700 received by retired ambassadors like Sir Horace Rumold and Sir Edmund Monson down to the £1 2s. 6d. a year received by Mr. E. Moran, apothecary to Dublin Castle, whose office was abolished

The ages to which some of these pensioners live is astonishing. Men who retired on the ground of ill-health or old age back in the fifties still draw their annual stipend. There is one man named W. Learmonth, who appears to have inherited a pension which began six years before he was born. He was Lord Chancellor's messenger in the Supreme Court of Judicature, and the entries against his name are: "Retired at twenty-seven; cause, abolition of fees; pension commenced on Jan. 11, 1832, succeeded to compensation May 6, 1865." This individual also draws £47 128., as a "commutation annuity," and since 1879 another £24 3s. as a "commutation annuity" from the National Debt Commissioners.

Then there is a Mr. Fred. R. Brande, whose office as moneyers' apprentice in the Royal Mint was abolished in 1851, when he was twenty-two. He has drawn £150 a year compensation allowance since then, or £8,550 in all. But as well as this, Mr. Brande put in forty-four years' service as a clerk in the Mint and retired in 1891 at the age of 61, with a pension of £311 2s. 2d. a year, his salary having been £466 13s. 4d.

There was another nineteen-year-old moneyers' apprentice named Henry Finch when the office was abolished in 1851. He, too, draws £150 a year. W. M. Carpendale, a clerk in the National

Debt office, retired in 1854, at the age of 28, on the ground of "ill-health." He still draws a pension of £32 a year. A curious pension granted in the same year

is that under the heading of "Slave trade services" to a storekeeper at St. Helena, who still draws £43 a year because his office was

Since 1862 Henry Mills, formerly lower turnkey at the old Queen's Prison, has drawn £4 9s. 9d. because his office was abolished. In the report there are numerous instances of men who retired thirty and forty years ago on the ground of ill-health still drawing their ensions. An instructor in mat-making at Pentonville Prison has drawn £22 18s. 11d. a year since 1866. An inspector of fisheries has drawn £367 a year since 1867.

The great majority of the prison pension-

ers seem to have retired because of bad health. and there are hundreds of cases given in the Blue-book

When the tolls on Chelsea Bridge were done away with in 1879, J. J. Browning, the collector, was given a pension of £17 1s. 2d., which he still draws.

A very large pension that has been paid for many years is that to Sir T. G. Fardell, M.P. for North Paddington, whose office as Registrar in the Bankruptcy Court was abolished in 1872, when he was 38 years old. He held office for four years at a salary of £1,000. His compensation allowance has been £666 13s. 4d. a year for the last thirty-six years, or

Another active pensioner is Sir Courtenay Ilbert, the Clerk of the House of Commons, whose salary is £2,000 a year. He draws £1,000 a year pension in respect to the office of Parliamentary Counsel, which he held for fifteen years.

The names of a number of pensioners are given whose service in office ranged from thirty years to the forty-seven years of O. May, a laborer at Hampton Court, who retired at the age of 74, and the fifty-five years of a British Museum attendant.

One of the most curious pensions in the report is that under the Irish Civil Service. It is £64 3s. 4d. given to T. Moriarity, a "seneschal" at Dublin Castle, whose office was abolished in 1850. Here is a list of distinguished pensioners:

		-ren		
v	Lord Cromer	£900	0	(
	Sir Henry Drummond-Wolff	1,700	0	1
	Sir E. Malet	1,700	0	•
	Sir Norman Lockyer	533	6	1
	Lord Welby	1,541	13	
	Lord Sanderson	1,533	6	
	Sir E. Bradford	828	13	
	Sir Robert Anderson	400	. 0	1
	Sir Digby Pigott	1,000	0	1
	Lord Dunboyne	1,200	0	
	Sir Nigel Kingscote	200	0	(
	—Londo			

CHRISTIAN PASTIMES

One of the workers in a Chinese mission became much interested in two Chinamen who, she found, owned a flourishing laundry in her own home neighborhood. She looked in once in a while to see how things were going with them, and one morning found Sam smiling and cheerful, as usual, but John was missing. "Where is John this morning?" she asked. "Oh," answered Sam amiably, Chlistian gen'leman hit him in the head with a blick, and he all same in hospital."

Before going out a woman should be sure her complexion is on straight.

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