

vessels can run much closer to her than they can to a light on land.

Buoys. In 1899 there was an International convention on the subject of buoyage, which resulted in the adoption of rules to govern the shapes and colours of buoys. Canada has adopted these International regulations, and all our larger buoys have been made to conform in shape as well as in colour to these International regulations. To make the necessary improvements involved the furnishing of a large number of conical buoys.

The ingenuity that has been shown in the development of signal buoys is most interesting. The earliest signal buoy is the old bell buoy. I doubt if this has been much improved since the eighteenth century, when,

The good old Abbot of Aberbrothok
First placed a bell on the Inchcape rock,
On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung.

When the rock was hid by the surges' swell,
The mariners heard the warning bell;
And then they knew the perilous rock,
And blast the Abbot of Aberbrothok.

Tempora mutantur. Now the mariners curse a too paternal Government for not having replaced the bell buoy by a lightship or a pile lighthouse!

The bell buoy seems specially to appeal to the imagination of poets, perhaps because later types of signal buoys commend themselves rather to the utilitarian than to the sentimental side of our nature. Rudyard Kipling makes the bell buoy sing, with no lack of imaginative power indeed, and with the vigour that is his chief charm, but emphatically in the spirit of today:—

They christened my brother of old,
And a saintly name he bears;
They gave him his place to hold
At the head of the belfry stairs,
Where the minster-towers stand
And the breeding kestrels cry.