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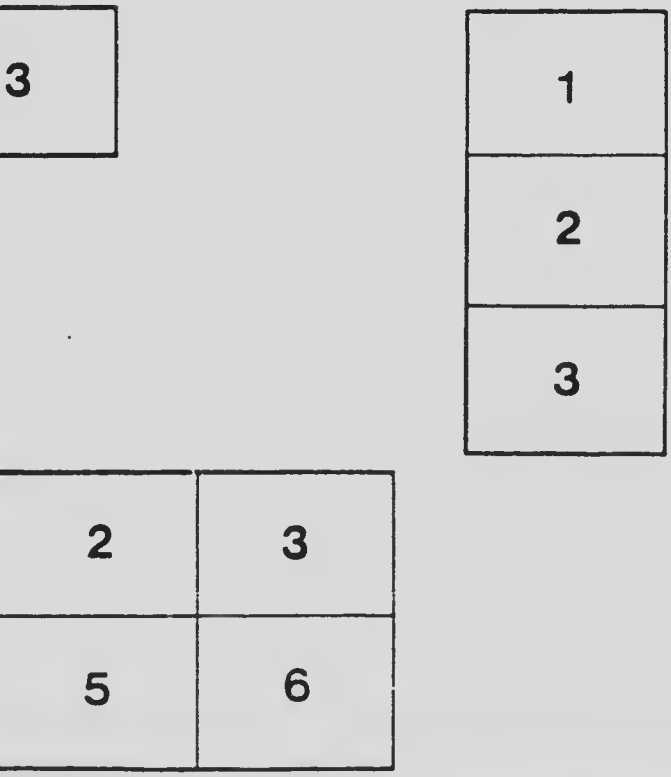

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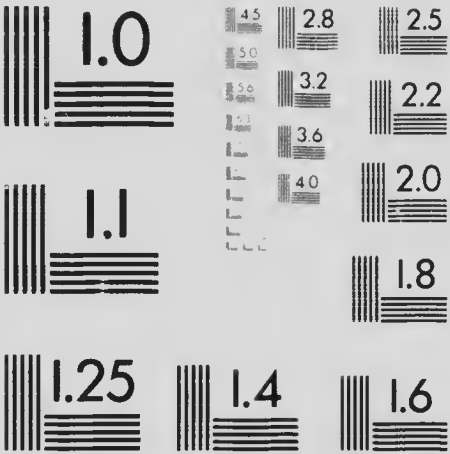

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CLEARED FOR ACTION

BY HOWARD STEELE

LONDON: T. FISHER UNWIN
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TO THE HANDY MAN

TO all you men, so nice and neat,
That make the crews that make the
Fleet
That backs us up and sees us through—
I drink a little health to you!

No matter what your job may be—
Above, below, on land or sea;
No matter what you are or do—
I drink this little health to you!

No matter where you've served or been—
In Dreadnought, Cruiser, Submarine,
Destroyer, Miner—Gunboat too—
I drink this little health to you!

THE THING THAT MAKES OUR NAVY

THE THING THAT MAKES OUR NAVY

THERE'S a lot o' bus'ness lately in the papers every day
'Bout the Navy (Royal Navy);
It doesn't matter very much exactly wot they say
'Bout the Navy (Royal Navy).
But they say, "We 'aven't ships enough our shells, our guns are few,
The rest are buildin' twice as fast. Wot ever shall we do?"
But I tell you straight, me maties, *they forget about the crew,*
For the thing that makes our Navy is *the man.*

Now, a battleship is scrap-iron if she
doesn't 'old a crew,
In the Navy (Royal Navy);
'Er guns is useless, though they shoot
from England to Peru,
For the Navy (Royal Navy);
If they 'aven't got a gunner for to lay
them neat an' right,
They might just as well be rustin' in the
fact'ry, out o' sight,
Wi' the crew an 'orde o' madmen an' the
ship's commander—tight,
For the thing that makes our Navy is
the man.

Then below 'er decks the stoke-'old would
be chilly as could be
In the Navy (Royal Navy),
If there weren't no stokers in the place
when she is out at sea,
Wi' the Navy (Royal Navy).

For a furnace cannot get red-'ot wi'out a
lot o' fuel,
An' a lump o' coal is lifeless, boys—or so
I learnt at school,
While a glowin', 'eated shovel ain't an
independent tool:
So the thing that makes our Navy is
the man.

In the black an' steamin' engine-rooms,
between the stoke'olds dark,
O' the Navy (Royal Navy),
Are the engineers 'oo listen to the boomin'
an' the bark,
In the Navy (Royal Navy).
O, the mighty turbines! God! *They*
need a lot o' seein' to,
If they are to stop when wanted, quite
respectable an' true,
Which, as yet, unless they're forced to,
they will flat refuse to do,
So the thing that makes our Navy is
the man.

Then, above the deck, there is a man oo spends most o' 'is day
In the Navy (Royal Navy),
In boxin' o' the compass in a funny sort o' way,
For the Navy (Royal Navy).
'E can tell you if you're sailin' off o' England or o' France,
The star that you're beneath of, an' the closest sort o' chance
Wot you 'ave o' makin' Portsmouth for the squadron's New Year's dance;
So the thing that makes our Navy is *the man.*

A torpedo is a rummy sort o' deadly-lookin' thing
O' the Navy (Royal Navy),
Wi' a fishy-lookin' body an' a sharply-pointed sting,
In the Navy (Royal Navy)

Yet although it moves like lightnin', wi' a power all its own,
An', although its loud explosion 'as an awful sort o' tone,
The machine that aims an' fires it is a thing o' flesh and bone,
So the thing that makes our Navy is *the man.*

In the little armoured conning-towers that top the battleships
O' the Navy (Royal Navy),
An' the fire-controllin' stations that give the gunners tips
In the Navy (Royal Navy),
There's a lot o' fine machinery that works so good and true,
There 'ardly is a blessed thing for the officers to do,
But—machinery can't give commands or a battle-range to you,
So the thing that makes our Navy is *the man.*

Now the ship is cleared for action, an' the
Ensign at the peak
Is the Navy's (Royal Navy);
In less than 'arf-an-hour or so the guns
begin to speak
For the Navy (Royal Navy).
She's all in perfect order for to fight a
winnin' fight,
But ten thousand yards abeam o' 'er,
'er rival's just as tight,
So *our Flag depends upon the man 'oo
squints along the sight!*
Thus the thing that makes our Navy is
the man.

THE MEN
BEHIND THE TUBE

THE MEN BEHIND THE TUBE

(Torpedo-Boat Destroyer Flotilla)

THE battleship, she rules the seas;
The cruiser helps her out;
The men that man her hungry guns
Are men indeed and stout;
But none of all those sailor-men,
With steady brain and eye,
Can teach the swift destroyer's *crew*
The way to fight and die!

While the man in the cruiser is sleepin',
The rain drummin' over 'is 'ead,
The little destroyers are creepin',
The mouth o' their stacks glowin' red,
Out through the night an' the darkness,
Lashed by the spray an' the wind,
For we're out an' away at the break o' the day
Aleavin' the slow 'uns be'ind!

THE MEN BEHIND THE TUBE

If the man in the cruiser is dyin',
  The yell o' 'is armament done,
The crash o' the wireless acryin'
  Will bring us around on the run.
We don't do the most o' the shoutin'!
  We *fight* an' we give it 'em 'ot,
For it's God for the best at the tube-
    layin' test
  An' 'ell for the one wot gets shot.

When the panicy search-lights are flittin'
  An' the seas are aflood wi' the light,
The fear-maddened guns begin spittin'
  As soon as we come into sight.
We 'erd them like sheep as we kill them,
  They glow in their 'alos o' flame:
Then it's death at a blow for the man oo
    is slow
  An' life for the man who can aim!

THE MEN BEHIND THE TUBE

We are pawns in the game—never counted—
  But pawns that have learned 'ow to die.
For when ev'ry gun is dismounted
  An' all o' the tubes is awry,
The boats driftin' wrecks on the combers
  An' water aroar in the hold,
We stand till we drown an' the vessel goes down—
  The same as our fathers of old!

The bugles are wailin' "Good-bye!"
  There's blood in the sea an' the sky,
Keep touch as you go—What's that thunder below?
  The bulk-heads what's gone—an' now we must go
The same as our fathers of old—
  Cap the quarter-deck!—
The same as our fathers of old!

THE MEN BEHIND THE TUBE

The battleship, she rules the seas;
The cruiser helps her out;
The men that man her hungry guns
Are men inaced and stout;
But none of all those sailor-men,
With steady brain and eye,
Can teach the swift destroyer's *crew*
The way to fight and die!

"BULLDOG" CHARLIE

"BULLDOG" CHARLIE

(Lord Charles Beresford)

'E'S known as "Bulldog" Charlie, an' it is the bloomin' name
That just fits 'im from 'is 'ead unto 'is 'eels,
For 'e 'as an eye like lightnin' an' a jaw that's strong an' lean ;
'E's the sort that, when 'e's pounded, never squeals.
'E is little, but e's ginger an' 'e 'as a sturdy frame,
An' a fist like any bruiser's an' 'e allus plays the game.
'E's the sort o' bird 'is captors would find awful 'ard to tame,
For 'e isn't called for nothin', "Bulldog" Charlie!

'E was 'ot as any pepper when 'e 'eld the
old command,
For the ship 'ad to be polished white
as snow.
If it wasn't! Mind your trappin's!
Charlie's comin' on the scene!—
'E was ready with a week o' it or so!
Either facin' paint was ordered or a dosin'
o' 10a,
For when *Charlie* does "Divisions" you
must stow your kit away.
As 'e came along the 'ammocks you could
'ear the fellows say:
"Straighten up, me lads, it 'appens to
be Charlie!"

When a scrap was in the offin' Charlie
allus was in front,
For 'e never was the man to 'ang be'ind.
When they murmured "Clear for action"
round the steady-marchin' square,
An' you smelt a comin' tussle in the
wind

You would see 'im draw 'is tooth-pick an'
get ready for the fun.
'E would slash like any butcher till 'e
made the niggers run,
An' when once, they nearly copped us
when they rushed our bloomin' gun,
Why—the man oo used 'is fists was
"Bulldog" Charlie!

Now 'e's dipped 'is flag forever an' is
fightin' on the shore,
Aye, an' fightin' for the 'flatfeet' oo
are 'ere
An' oo keep the Empire safely an' receive
as great reward—
Well—about enough to keep yerself in
beer!
But 'e'll fight till 'e 'as won for us a sum
wot you can save,
So let us drink, me 'arties, to the bravest
of the brave

An'—this part I 'ates to mention—when
'e's fought into 'is grave,
We will chip upon 'is tombstone "Bull-
dog" Charlie!

THROUGH THE RAIN

THROUGH THE RAIN

'E WAS the finest man I knew
Oo wore a cocked 'at on 'is 'ead;
An' so—o' course it 'ad to be—
The best o' all the lot is dead.
'E'll never speak to us again,
So we must leave 'im in the rain.

Don't you 'ear the big drum poundin' slow?
Don't you hear the bandsmen playin' low?
The crew's atakin' turns to pull the gun along
An' the big drum's croonin' 'is funeral song.
Oh, the big drum's sobbin' so!

Since first 'e saw me long ago,
'E liked me more than I was worth;
An' as for 'im! To me 'e was
The only sub. upon the earth.
Yes, 'im an' me, 'e always said,
Was pals—an' now the beggar's dead!

Don't you 'ear the marchin', sad an' slow?
Don't you see the escort wi' their heads bent low,
An' 'is sword an' belt wi' the 'at 'e used to wear,
An' the wreaths an' crosses on the coffin there,
While the big drum's sobbin' so?

'E saved me more than I can tell,
From callin's down I should 'ave 'ad.
When I was blue 'e cheered me up,
An' 'e was glad when I was glad,
An' so—o' course 'e went an' died
An' me?—I went ashore an' cried.

Don't you 'ear the gun-wheels rumblin' slow,
An' the rain upon the coffin, dim an' low?
The people stand an' stare at us amarchin' by,
An' over in the carriage I can 'ear 'is mother cry,
To the big drum sobbin' so!

The days will slowly crawl along,
As we are crawlin' through the rain,
An' I will live me clockwork life,
An' never 'ear 'is voice again.
'E's gone where everyone must follow,
An' left me to me achin' sorrow.

Then carry 'im in wi' the big drum
poundin' slow,
An' lower 'im down while the mournful
bugles blow,
An' we don't want to watch, but o' course
we must,
While the Chaplain says the Service with
its 'Dust to dust.'
Then slope your arms an' go,
With the big drum sobbin' so!

THE ENGINEER

THE ENGINEER

(*All Ranks*)

"*And consider the conduct of the engineers, H.M.S. . . . . highly courageous.*"—Any Report after any accident to any H.M. Ships.

THERE is a man oo's little seen, a gritty man is 'e,
A slippy man, a nippy man, a man oo loves the sea.
'E don't go round in brass an' blue—'e 'as no time for fear—
The man that I alludes to is the war-ship engineer.

When underneath a boilin' sun we wish that we was dead,
'E's wishin' for the coolness o' the open over'ead.
An' when the pantin' 'elmsman falls an' no one's there to steer,
Oo listens to the coral scrape an' laughs? The engineer!

When we are tryin' 'ard to pray, an' every
face is pale,
An' ev'ry bolt is screamin' with the 'owlin'
o' the gale,
An' ev'ry life is 'angin' on the racin' o'
the screw,
'E stops it when she lifts astern an',
laughin', pulls us through!

When blind bow clings to blinder bow
and Death is on the deep,
Because "somebody blundered!" an' a
look-out was asleep;
When water's racin' through the breach,
and bulk-'eads snap an' strain,
'E keeps the engines goin' till we back 'er
out again.

As, like the drummin' o' the surf, the armour piercers beat,
Their song on the protectin' deck beneath our 'oppin feet,
'E 'ears them shoutin' to get in, an' chuckles as they yell,
Although 'e knows there's just a foot between 'imself an' 'ell!

When, wobblin' like a drunken man, we bare our streamin' keel,
An' out across our empty decks the frightened bugles' peal,
An', when the burstin' bulk-'ead goes beneath the sloggin' Krupp,
'E fights alone, unseen, un'eard, to keep the gauges up!

Then, as 'er battered bulk 'eaves up, an' as 'er 'ead sinks low,
We sees 'is four propellers turn—uncommon stiff an' slow,
But *turnin'* still—an', as she sinks, from out' 'er depths we 'ear,
The grim, dare-devil cheerin' o' the warship engineer!

Then 'ere's a bloomin' 'ealth to you, you stinkin' bit o' muck!
I needn't tell you wot you are. I wish you best o' luck,
You dirty, greasy, oily MAN! Without the time to fear!
God gi' me pluck to touch on yours, you warship engineer!

GUNS

GUNS

THERE'S the latest sixteen-incher with 'is barrel long and lean;
There's the 'undred-pounder quick-fire an' the others in between;
There's the Pom-pom an' the Maxim an' a dozen other 'uns,
An' the terror o' the landsman is the Naval guns!

No matter where you're livin' an' no matter oo you are,
Take care you treat Us decent—don't you never go too far!
Don't you touch your British neighbour; you'll be sorry if you do!
It'll only be a little till the guns get *you!*

Then get around the bend o' the world,
for the guns are shellin' the town!
The guns 'ave begun, wi' the risin' sun, to
shoot till the sun goes down,
The guns 'ave begun an' your life is done,
no matter wot you may do,
For it's only a change o' position an'
range till the guns get *you!*

There's the peerin' sixteen-incher, nigh
an 'undred tons in weight,
Lookin' 'ungry from the turret, like a
serpent, with 'is mate.
E's not afraid o' nothin' an' 'e'll knuckle
down to none—
'E's the Father an' the Mother o' the
Naval Gun!

Then get around the bend o' the world,
for 'e's prowlin' about for more!
'E'll 'ammer a bloomin' fleet at sea or
'ammer a fort ashore.

So 'urry away! 'E's 'ungry to-day an'
ready for action too,
They've only to change elevation or range
till the gun gets *you!*

There's the battleship quick-firer, with 'is
'undred-pounder shell—
'E's runnin' free excursion-trains—Destroyer-crews to 'Ell!
'E'll find you an' 'e'll get you an' 'e'll 'it
you sure as fate,
So better send 'Surrender' or you'll be
too late!

Then get around the bend o' the world,
for the searchers are lightin' the scene,
An' there's no use atryin' to send us down
by usin' a submarine;
There's no use atryin'! There's no use
acryin'—it's not what a sailor should
do,
An' it's only a 'sight' by the aid o' a light
till the gun gets *you!*

There's the 'umpy four-point-seven wi' a reputation made,
'E's not exactly 'andy at manœuvres or parade;
But we got 'im up to Ladysmith without a rest or 'alt,
An' if 'e's comin' at you, it's your own damn fault!

Then get around the bend o' the world, for the guns are beginnin' to land.
We've plenty o' cordite an' projectile an' plenty o' cover to 'and.
It's no use arunnin'—we'll all begin gunnin'! We're noted for 'ittin' it too!
An' it's only a case o' a 'suitable place' till the gun gets *you!*

There's the soldier-man's twelve-pounder an', as such, 'e's all you need,
'E's got the range, 'e's got the weight an' necessary speed.

We'll take 'im over anything an' anywhere you please—
'E's a treasure-'ouse o' shootin' an we 'old the keys!

Then get around the bend o' the world, for 'e's comin' along sublime,
The village is c[illegible] a mile away, we've plenty o' extra time;
So 'urry along—*we* won't be long! We're comin' to see it through,
An' we've opened the road an' we've only to load till the gun gets *you!*

There's the Maxim, an' the 'Aeroplane' an' plenty more I know,
But in another tick or two they'll want the watch below;
So—don't forget wot I 'ave said, whatever else you do:
Jest mind your bloomin' bus'ness lest the guns get *you!*

Then get around the bend o' the world, for
the guns are shellin' the town!
The guns 'ave begun, wi' the risin' sun, to
shoot till the sun goes down!
When the bandoliers are empty, then the
wise commander runs,
For it isn't no use to stand against the
Guns! Guns! Guns!

, for

, to

the

the

TEACHERS

TEACHERS

NOW all you wise young sailor-boys
oo joined the ship to-day,
You listen to the men oo know.
No matter 'ow you twist it an' no matter
wot you say,
It's better to respect your foe.
'E's a teacher with a bloomin' reputation,
Yes! 'E knows a thing or two, that's
sure.
'E's a teacher in a school that is useful as
a rule—
The tally o' the school is War.

There was Mr. Fuzzy Wuzzy an' 'e taught
me all 'e knew,
An' taught it as a lesson should be
taught.
There wasn't anything at all the beggar
couldn't do,
An' fightin' was 'is joy—an' 'ow 'e fought!

'E didn't care a bloody for the soldiers,
An' 'e didn't care a bloody for the square,
An' it wasn't 'ard to see wot 'e didn't care for *me*,
But 'e taught me 'ow to fight an' did it fair.

Then a Dutchman South o' Egypt volunteered to show me 'ow,
An' 'e started in by lickin' Tommy A.
'E got 'im stuck in Ladysmith—'e might be there till now,
But we an' Durban wasn't far away.
They called us an' we answered neat an' 'andy,
An' Brother Heiné taught me all 'e could.
Yes, it's due to Tom an' 'im, that I'm wide awake 'an slim,
An' I took 'is teachin' thankful as I should.

Then a Chinaman near Pekin taught me
other things beside,
Such as always lyin' low an' bein' deep.
'E was always 'ot when livin' an' 'otter
when 'e died,
An' mostly lyin' doggo when asleep.
'E was nasty as the mustard that 'e looks
like,
An' when 'e was ahead 'e was be'ind ;
But I saw the trouble through an' 'e
taught me all 'e knew,
An' me certificate is signed.

There's an Arab off o' Persia an' 'e taught
me plenty more
All about the little job 'e carried on.
'E kept a little vessel off a village on the
shore,
An' when you called to see 'im, 'e
was gone.

'E could 'ide a dozen rifles in a coffin—
When 'e wasn't 'idin' something 'e was 'id!—
But 'e trained me till the end as a teacher an' a friend,
An' now the beggar's sorry that 'e did!

So all you wise young sailor-boys that joined the ship to-day,
You listen to the men oo know.
No matter 'ow you twist it an' no matter what you say,
It's better to respect your foe.
'E's a teacher with a bloomin' reputation,
Yes! 'E knows a thing or two that's sure.
'E's a teacher in a school that is useful, as a rule—
The tally o' the school is War.

"I DON'T!"

"I DON'T!"

I DON'T know why I don't desert—
I've lots o' reasons to!
I'm always on the 'jaunty's' books,
Me work is never through.
They tell me to do everything
An' kick me when I won't.
I've often thought I'll sling me 'ook,
But—strike me pink—I don't!

I've stood for hours out on the bridge,
In rain an' wet an' cold,
To watch the guidin'-lights ahead,
An' do as I am told.
I might refuse an'—get it 'ot
For telling' 'em I won't!
I've often thought o' breakin' leave,
But—damn it all—I don't!

"I DON'T!"

I've shot for hours in stinkin' smoke
  At things I cannot see,
An' 'eard the ol' range-finder's voice,
  Come swearin' down to me.
E's 'owled at me to shift me sights,
  An' damned me when I won't.
I've often longed to chuck the lot,
  But—blow me eyes—I don't!

I've cleaned or painted hours an' hours,
  Till all me 'brass' is bright,
Then 'ad some baby Snottie say,
  "You don't know black from white!"
I might refuse to start again,
  An' tell 'im plain I won't,
Then knock 'im down an' swim ashore,
  But—bust me guns—I don't!

THE FLAT-IRON

THE FLAT-IRON

(H. M. Flat-Bottomed River Gunboats)

I'm a sub. or a midshipman
[illegible] ing they calls a crew,
[illegible] the Ensign at the stern the same
as the real ships do,
[illegible] goes around in a Tropic[illegible] tream wi'
a foot o' wash below,
[illegible]o teach the lesson a *ship* [illegible]ch wher-
[illegible]er a *boat* can go.

So please don't laugh at the Flat-iron—
It's not wot a gent would do.
The pore little puffin' Flat-iron,
She never did nought to you!
She's a good little ship, the Flat-iron,
At doin' wot she's to do.
So please don't laugh at the Flat-iron,
The Flat-iron, the sub. an' the crew!

Whenever Somebody o' So-an'-so 'as
started to play the goat,
Along comes a man in an ol' canoe to
talk to an 'At-an'-Coat,
An' the 'At-an'-Coat, 'e sends for the sub.
an' gives 'im instructions trite,
An' the sub. goes back an' the steam
blows off, an' the Flat-iron leaves
that night.

They crosses the bar wi' an inch to spare,
an' they steers by the trees ashore,
An' the man oo come in the ol' canoe, 'e
lies on the cabin floor ;
An' 'e's sick as ever a man can be, dis-
graceful to be seen,
While the sub. 'angs on to the rail an'
laughs when the Flat-iron takes it
green!

They gets to the mouth o' the So-an'-so,
where the sea an' the river meet,
An' the Flat-iron spins in the current's
grip an' the sub. falls off 'is feet ;

An' she goes aground on the bloomin' bank,
an' she's landed, 'igh an' dry,
Till they all get out an' push 'er off, when
the second tide comes by!

Then off she goes like a bloomin' lord
atrailin' 'is bloomin' train,
A dozen times they run 'er ashore an'
back 'er off again;
An' at last they come where they want to
come an' they stops where the foe
can see,
An' the sub. goes off, as the steam blows
off, to call on the Tweedle-dee.

The sub. 'e calls on the Tweedle-dee an'
'e tells 'im wot 'e should—
That someone will spank the Somebody
if the Somebody won't be good;
An' the Tweedle-dee says that 'e *won't*
be good, an' the sub. 'e drinks 'is tea,
An' 'e tells 'im all that 'e's goin' to do to
the 'ouse o' the Tweedle-dee.

The sub. goes back to the Flat-iron then,
for 'e's tired o' 'is country's foes,
An' that impudent Somebody's on the
shore, 'is fingers upon 'is nose:
An' the crew they jumps at the little
thing that the sub. 'e calls a gun —
The thing that you train wi' the Flat-iron's
wheel an' jams when the fight is won.

The crew, they shoot wi' the pea-shooter,
an' the Flat-iron waltzes round;
They scare all the birds in the wavin'
palms, an' they scare all the beasts on
the ground;
They play Aunt Sally wi' Somebody an'
Somebody tells 'em plain,
'E's ready to do as 'e ought to do an' the
sub. goes ashore again.

The Somebody kisses the sub.'s left cheek,
an' the Tweedle-dee kisses the right,
An' everyone praises their noble selves,
an' nobody wants to fight;
So the sub. 'e carries them both aboard
an' they all are friends again,
An' the sub. makes both o' them awful
drunk on a case o' the best
champagne!

So that is the way that the thing is done
whenever the trouble comes,
An' that is the way that 'e settles things
wi' never a roll o' drums—
The sub. 'e goes wi' 'is Flat-iron an' 'is
bottles o' best champagne,
An' the Somebody drinks wi' the Tweedle-
dee an' they all are friends again!

So please don't laugh at the Flat-iron—
  The Flat-iron that knows wot to do,
When trouble's in wait for the Flat-iron
  An' trouble's in wait for the crew.
An' the King, oo's the boss o' the Flat-
    iron,
  Is in for a shindy or two.
Then give a good cheer for the Flat-iron,
  The Flat-iron, the sub. an' the crew—
    Hoo! Hoo!—
The Flat-iron, the sub. an' the crew!

THE PADRE

THE PADRE

OH, 'e preaches nice on Sunday an' 'e swears at us on Monday
An' 'e works us all like niggers day an' night,
An' 'e talks o' doin' kindness while 'e's got 'is foot be'ind us,
An' 'e trains the bloomin' Snotties 'ow to fight.
Oh, 'e asks us, "Are you ready?" an' 'e tells us to be steady
When across the burnin' sands the bugles play,
An' 'e leads the bloomin' boarders (though it isn't in the orders)
An 'e takes us through the charge that wins the day.

Oh, the Padre, Padre, Hallelujah Padre, rushin' like a madman in the thickest o' the rush,
Calls a fight a 'party,' an' the enemy 'me 'earty' an' the 'ottest battle 'just a little brush.'

It is dangerous to 'oller as you'll find unto your sorrow,
When 'e's learnin' o' 'is sermon wi' a moan,
For 'e's got to know it proper lest 'e come a nasty cropper
When 'e's preachin' in 'is modulated tone.
'E will shoot wi' any fellow an' you ought to 'ear 'im bellow
If you miss the target once wi'in awhile,
But you'll find it worth the trouble if you make a record double,
For 'e'll treat you to a pippin o' a smile!

Oh, the Padre, Padre, mighty cheerful Padre sez, "That's splendid shootin', John!" an' claps you on the back,
Wi' the Padre's smile awaitin'—well, you *would* deserve a ratin' if you didn't 'it the centre o' the black.

When a cricket game is goin' 'e will always make a showin',
For 'e's learned 'is schoolin' thoroughly an' well,

An' when football they are playin' you can
'ear the people sayin' :
" 'E could score a goal wi'in the gate o'
'ell ! "
'Ow 'is blue an' white is flashin' as 'e's
onward swiftly dashin',
An' we trounce the bloomin' Army 'ead
to foot !
'E can dodge a back so easy an' 'is
manner is so breezy,
There is concentrated magic in 'is boot !

Oh, the Padre, Padre, mighty skilful
Padre dodges through the forwards
neat an' dribbles down the line.
When the crowd a cheer is roarin' an'
you look in need o' scorin' you will
find the Padre playin' very fine !

But 'is place is in the battle where the
ugly bullets rattle,
An' the smoke is thick as any Northern
fog,
When it comes to 'elp a fellow oo is turnin'
quickly yellow
An' is makin' the last entry in 'is log.

Then you'll find the Padre crawlin' where
the wounded men are fallin',
Wi' 'is crucifix an' water-bottle out,
As 'e flits among the fallen you can 'ear
'is voice acallin'
In the ruck an' mad excitement o' the rout.
Oh, the Padre, Padre, mighty gallant
Padre finds a dozen dyin' men an'
'auls 'em from the strife.
"Why, the V.C. is a trinket. Wouldn't
take it! Do not think it," 'e will
murmur; "wait until I save a life."
When 'e dies 'e does it splendid. When
e' knows 'is life is ended
'E will give it up an' give it wi' a grin.
'E will simply slip 'is cable when 'e finds
that 'e is able
An' St. Peter opens up to let 'im in.
You will see 'im proudly lyin' 'mid the
wounded an' the dyin',
'E tries to grin an' whispers wi' a smile:
*Played, School? . . . Come on, you
cowards! . . . 'E's the last o' all the
'Owards. . . . :
'Old your volleys, laas! . . . Yes, daa, I
won the mile.*

LOST

LOST

In the summer of 1913 a boat-crew from a British cruiser was lost while cruising among the islands of the Indian Ocean. The boat and its occupants were never found.

THERE'S no wind along the blue—
'Taint no use to look no more!—
Nothin' stirs the tall bamboo
On the edges o' the shore.
Give way, Starboard! Back her, Port!
Turn your bows to ship an' sea!
Evenin' waits an' day is short.
They 'ave gone from you an' me—
Gone for good from you an' me.

Somewhere 'is boat is driftin',
With no 'and upon the oar;
Risin', fallin', fallin', liftin',
An' 'e won't come back no more—
Never come back any more.

Day by day we've cruised about
Through the islands great an' small,
Turned the beggars inside out:
But it ain't no use at all.

Keep your watches posted yet.
  Don't get careless-like an' slack.
'E's a comrade, don't forget,
  But 'e's never comin' back—
  Ain't anever comin' back.

Somewhere now 'is boat is driftin',
  With no 'and upon the oar,
Risin', fallin', fallin', liftin',
  An' 'e won't come back no more—
  Never come back any more.

Someone 'ad to out an' cruise
  Up an' down this sweatin' sea!
Though we mope it ain't no use,
  But I'd rather it was me
Lyin' dead, instead o' 'im
  Dead among the cutter's crew,
For 'e was so straight an' trim,
  Ever 'earty-like an' true!—
  Oh, 'e was so straight an' true!

Somewhere now their boat is driftin',
  With no 'and upon the oar,
Risin', fallin', fallin', liftin',
  An' 'e won't come back no more—
  Never come back any more.

LOST

When our cutter's 'oisted in,
  While the others take their turn,
I just mope an' try to grin
  Lookin' weary out astern.
Nothin' stirs on land or sea
  An' the chinkin' davit-chain
Keeps on sayin' low to me:
  " 'E ain't comin' back again—
  Never comin' back again!"

Somewhere now 'is boat is driftin',
  With no 'and upon the oar,
Risin', fallin', fallin', liftin',
  An' 'e won't come back no more —
  Never come back any more.

Weeks ago 'e went away
  An' we'd quarrelled 'fore 'e went.
'Ope was given up to-day.
  Can't you guess at what it's meant?
If there is an 'eaven—then
  God should know I'm feelin' blue,
For 'e weren't like other men
  An' I'd quarrelled with 'im, too.

Somewhere now 'is boat is driftin',
  With no 'and upon the oar,
Risin', fallin', fallin', liftin',
  An' 'e won't come back no more—
  Never come back any more.

I 'ave cursed this blazin' sea,
  But it ain't no bloomin' good ;
I 'ave cursed the Admiralty—
  I'd be prayin' if I could.
Now the boats are 'oisted in,
  An' the drummin' o' the screw
Murmurs through its steady din :
  "'E is lost to us and you—
  Lost for ever now to you.

Somewhere now 'is boat is driftin'
  With no 'and upon the oar,
Risin', fallin', fallin', liftin',
  'An 'e won't come back no more—
Never come back any more.
  There's a wind come up that's steady,
An' the oars an' sail are ready ;
  But 'e won't come back no more—
  Never come back any more.

BOAT-CRUISIN'

BOAT-CRUISIN'

(Inspecting boats, H.M. Sloop ——, British East Africa)

WE'RE cruisin' down the sunny coast to see if all is right—
A cutter with a Snottie in command—
We're polin' up lost little creeks from mornin' until night,
Or sailin' through the surf in sight o' land.
We visit tin-pot villages it takes a day to find
'Id in the jungle, almost out o' reach,
An' when the dark is comin' an' the day is left be'ind
We snore around a fire upon the beach.

Sometimes we rows for hours an' hours up rivers wide an' still,
Where everything is silent-like an' dead,
An' misty, stinkin' vapours rise to make your stomach ill,
An' monkeys shout an' chatter over'ead.

The big trees drip wi' water an' the creepers climb an' climb,
An' rainbow orchids blossom in the green,
There's fever in the rainy, smellin' jungle all the time,
So the Snottie feeds us careful wi' quinine.

Then sudden out o' darkness into sunniness we pop,
An' we see a little village on the shore,
An' all the dirty niggers come astarin' as we stop,
An' the Snottie goes avisitin' once more.
The 'eadman shows 'im everything is as it ought to be,
An' everything is goin' right as rain,
An' underneath the palis roof they drinks a cup o' tea,
An' 'avin' said 'Good-bye,' we start again.

At last we make an 'arbour in the endless
belt o' trees,
An' we slip across the bar all nice an'
neat;
We see the creakin' Arab dhows aliftin'
in the seas
An' furl the slammin' sail among the
fleet;
Then, when the search is over an' the
nasty work is done,
They gives us fruit an' raisins as we go,
The 'arbour sinks be'ind us wi' the sinkin'
o' the sun
An' we lands an' sets our little fire aglow.

The night 'as come upon us an' we've
finished for the day;
We builds a little fire an' sit about;
We smoke a little 'baccy then we stow
our pipes away,
An' the Snottie takes 'is little banjo out.

An', somehow, as he plays it—*tinky, tunky, tinky, tink,*
An' the peaceful, sleepy ditties rise an' fall,
The troubles turn the corner an' we all begin to think
We ain't so badly treated after all.

So day by day we're cruisin' up an' down the sandy shore,
An' night by night we sit around an' sing.
We're just a lot 'o sailormen an' raggies—nothin' more—
Asailin' an' inspectin' for the King.
We like the job we're doin' an' we're glad to be alive,
We're takin' wot we get o' work an' fun,
Until the day, unlucky day, the parent ship arrives,
An' then the bloomin' cruisin' will be done.
(*Worse luck!*).
An' then the bloomin' cruisin' will be done.

OIL!

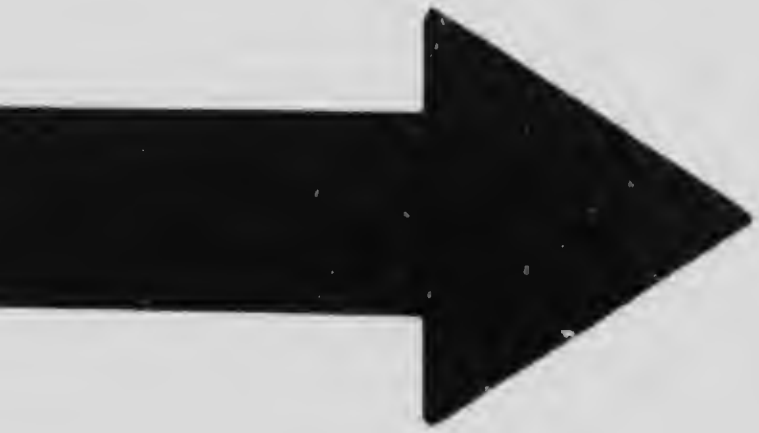
OIL!

(*The Lament of the Chief Stoker*)

No more important coal-burning ships are to be built for the Royal Navy. The latest will all be equipped with oil-burning engines.—EXTRACT.

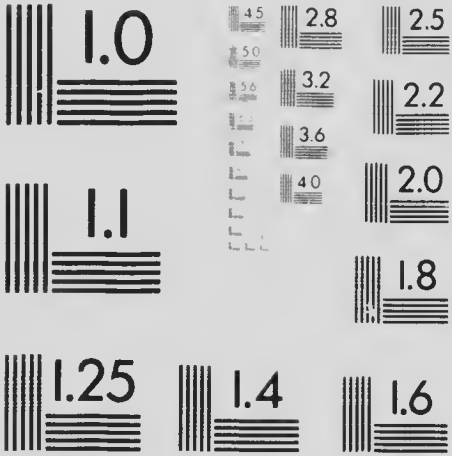
OH, yes! I've heard the latest news.
It's awful silly, too.
Imagine drivin' anything
That goes by any screw
Without the use o' bloomin' coal!
It almost makes me boil!
(*Hi! Close that furnace-door, you fool!*
Y' mustn't let the boilers cool.
Say! Don't you hear me there, you mule!)
Oil!

Just think o' all the smelliness,
The greasiness and slime
That introdoocin' oil will mean—
The muckin' an' the time



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



'Twill take to trim the bloomin' wicks.
  We have enough o' toil!
(*Hi! Shovel harder there, m'lad.*
Your stokin' is most awful bad!
I'll make you hustle up, by Gad!)
  Oil!

An' don't the very name of it
  Nigh make you bilious?
There won't be any *strength* required.
  They'll do away with us.
They'll make an awful noise, I bet,
  If we our flannels soil.
(*We want a bit more coal here, men!*
We've got to put another ten
O' knots into our speed. Now then!)
  Oil!

You'll see the British Navy's pluck
  Go down to zero soon
If oil is burned in battleships,
  They say it is a boon.

OIL!

I say it ain't an I should *know!*
  You don't see any toil
Save wot is done by us. (*Hooray!*
We're gainin' speed, the "Pilots" say.*
We're out to make a mark to-day.)
  Oil!

As I 'ave said, the stokers are
  The only ones who work.
The others? Well, they do a *bit*,
  But mostly try to shirk.
And men who don't work with their strength,
  Ain't got no grit to boil.
(*Ah! Now the coal is glowin' red,*
We're steamin' mighty fast ahead.
It's thirty knots, the "owner"† said.)
  Oil!

I'll never stand in starchy ducks,
  As neat as any pin,
And handle burners, wicks and all
  And swim in paraffin.

---

* Navigating officers. † Captain.

OIL !

When Britain lights her blessed lamps,
  That does away with toil,
She'll use the grease to seal her fate.
(*Come, stoke away or we'll be late,*
We've got to make a better gait.)
  Oil!

No, never any oil for me!
  You see this sooty pen
All red like very flames of hell?
  Well, this is makin' *men.*
You need some pluck to work in this
  When there's a battle royal
A going madly overhead.
(*Here! Work! These embers must be fed!*
If not they'll pretty soon be dead.)
  Oil!

"R.N."

"R.N."

(With apologies to the author of 'Ubique')

THERE'S a couple o' letters you'll often find,
A couple you'll often see:
They come wi' a seaman's name, be'ind,
An' they stand for the King's Navee.
Two capital letters, that's all they are,
But they stand for a good deal more;
They stand for the Navy, near an' far,
Aloft, afloat an' ashore.
They stand for the Admiral, lootenant,
The Matloe an' Ass marine,
An' if you'll 'old your tongue for a bit,
I'll tell you wot they mean.

R.N. is the knockin', roarin' fight
Through the Nor' Atlantic gale,
When the ship's aplunge in the foamin' night
From funnel-mouth to rail.
R.N. is the thing that pulls you out
O' a smokin', 'owlin' 'ell.

"*R.N.*"

R.N. is the ship that goes about
  At the call o' the anchored bell.
R.N. is the black tornado's 'and
  That strips 'er, raw an' clean,
There's nothin' in sky, or s[illegible] or land,
  That R.N. doesn't mea[illegible]

R.N. is the firin', hours an' hours,
  At the thing you cannot see,
When the yellow, drivin' smoke-[illegible]k
    lowers
  An' carries away alee.
R.N. is the vessel's roarin' shake
  When the belchin' muzzles speak—
The tearin', leapin', poundin' quake
  From strainin' keel to peak.
R.N. is the dashin', spoutin' spray
  Where the shrapnel takes the green.
There's nothin' on earth, in night or day,
  That R.N. doesn't mean.

R.N. is the flame o' the burstin' mine
  An' the ship that lays or sweeps.
R.N. is the searchlight's cracklin' shine
  As the frightened convoy creeps.

R.N. is the chatterin' quick-fire's rave
  As the lean destroyers run.
R.N. is the transport's waitin' grave
  When the blindfold game is done.
R.N. is the swift torpedo's strike
  An' the slayer's flight unseen.
There's nothin' a man can 'ate or like
  That R.N. doesn't mean.

R.N. is the British flag unfurled
  At the yard o' the rakin' mast.
R.N. is the Cock o' all the world
  From the first o' the seas to the last.
R.N. is the blood o' Drake an' Blake
  An' [illegible] the blood can do.
R.N. is [illegible] ship that none can take
  An' the guns an' the British crew.
R.N. is the dreadnought, cruiser, scout,
  Destroyer, submarine.
There's nothin' in 'eaven or 'ell or out
  That R.N. doesn't mean!

THE WAY TO SEA

THE WAY TO SEA

D'YOU want to feel the wind in your face and the dash o' the liftin' spray?
D'you want to hear the yell o' the gull and the hum o' the sheet and stay?
D'you want to live where the air is Life and the soul o' a man is free?
Then answer the call o' Mother Carey! Up an' go to sea!

For there's plenty o' room for lads like you, plenty o' waitin' ships—
Schooner an' barque an' fishin' smack—gettin' their cargoes down,
And all they want is the sailormen. Before the hawser slips
Get aboard. If you want to live get shut o' the sleepy town.

For the spell o' the Sea is in your eyes
and the ocean cries for you—
Out o' the night you hear it call in the
voice o' the wild curlew,
The crash of the surf upon the beach
when the cold Nor'westers blow
And the thresh o' the rain on the level
sea. Take your kit an' go!

Go where the hammer-headed shark dreams
in a purple sea
And the wind is singin' a lullaby in the
crests o' the tall bamboo.
Go where the ice-fields grunt an' roar when
the tropics set 'em free.
Go for the ship is lyin' here an' the
water waits for you.

For you want to hear the boom o' the
sail and the whine o' the block an'
sheet,
You want to feel the kiss o' the Trades
an' the slap o' the hissin' sleet,

THE WAY TO SEA

You want to see the break o' the waves
when they shatter in clouds o' snow,
Then—throw your heart on a cargo ship
an' follow it below!

Go to the craft that waits for you, go to the
waitin' foam!
Go to the life that the sailor leads and
the joys that the sailors know!
Go to the heart of the restless sea, where
the bluff-bowed freighters roam!
Go to your grave in the silent deeps—
pack your kit and go!

Go where the surf through the coral moans.
Go where the great Pacific drones,
Go while the strength is in your bones!
Take your kit an' go!

THE NAVAL STATIONS

THE NAVAL STATIONS

Portsmouth.

LINKS of the Empire! 'Tis your mother speaks—
Portsmouth the old, the mightiest of the chain,
Grey with my guns that glare across the main,
Ready to speak should foes appear again.
Answer my question readily and true:
Fierce Naval Stations, is it well with you?

Gibraltar.

Mother, thy strongest daughter makes reply
Deep from her growling, steely-sinewed throat.
I am alert! I hold the narrow gate,
Watching the seas where foe and Briton float.
Strong is the iron-bound stronghold where I dwell;
Queen of the Naval Stations, it is well!

MALTA.

Mother, mine armour hangs within my reach,
Forged by the brave Knights-templar long ago;
Ringed by the purple seas my fortress lies
Baring its teeth, its baleful eyes aglow.
At but thy word across the steady swell
Loosed is its leach! Oh, mother, it is well.

ADEN.

Out from my twisted lips so torn and harsh
To thee, O Queen, my ready answer comes.
Still on my barren rocks thy standard flies,
Still from my plains resound the British drums.
Hideous am I, a ghastly sentinel,
Yet not less loyal; great Empress, it is well!

Colombo.

Mother, thy dark-skinned daughter answers thee.
Deep 'mid my fruits my tested weapons wait;
Fair is my face and gay my laughing eyes,
Fierce is my love and Tropic-hot my hate.
Bright though I am, a full-lipped Eastern belle,
Yet I can sting! O, Ranee, it is well.

Singapore.

First of thy blood to greet thee, mighty Queen,
In the Pacific, here I watch and stand
Stripped for the fight, my Dyak knife displayed,
Ready my guns to guard my jungle strand.
Safe ride thy vessels on my bosom-swell.
To thee I answer gladly: It is well!

Sarawak.

Mother, I answer o'er pacific seas.
Calmly I wait in savage might arrayed;
Bravely thy standard mocks the spicy air
Out on my ramparts endlessly displayed.
Loud thy adopted daughter speaks to tell
Unto her calling mother, it is well!

Hong Kong.

Mother, I answer from my sleepless guard.
Silent—and *West*—I gaze with loaded guns;
Ready for war my sentinels parade—
Yellow and white but both of them my sons.
In slinking stealth from out my citadel
I watch the dragoned flag. Yea, it is well!

Wei-Hai-Wei.

Fort faced by fort across the gloomy bay
Here in mine armoured solitude I bide ;
Over the junks my brooding monsters leer
Waiting to strike across the warring tide.
Speak, and my guns will drum their battle-knell.
Out from my post I answer : it is well !

Melbourne.

Hail, Greatest of Us All, thy daughter speaks.
Queen of the magic, languid-dreaming South,
Smiling I gaze upon the empty seas.
Sweet is my breath and cherry-lipped my mouth.
Moveless I wait the battle-trumpet yell ;
Then will I loose my thunder ! It is well.

Wellington.

Is it well, ask you of me, hoary Queen?
Back from my island fort I make reply:
Southward I guard, my sleeping bull-
dogs chained;
Calm are my ships and cloudless-clear my
sky.
Here 'neath the Cross I toy with shot and
shell
As did my namesake. Mother, it is well!

Falkland.

Chained to the Horn I sit within my
might
Backed by my heaven-seeking mountain-
peaks;
Into the South Atlantic stalk my ships.
Loud from her heart thy lonely daughter
speaks;
True rings my link as any silvern bell.
Ward of The North, pray hear me! It
is well.

Mauritius.

Sleepless I lie within my coral walls,
Hiding my strength among mine Eastern charms—
Spicy my perfumed breath and sleek my hair.
Ne'er would you guess the presence of mine arms,
Yet I am fierce as are the flames of Hell,
For I am born of flames. Yea, it is well!

Cape Town.

Last of thy race beneath the Cross am I!
Beauteous and great in languid grace I stand,
Tossing thine Ensign to the laughing sky,
Over the golden crescent of my strand.
But, when in wrath mine angry watch-dogs yell,
Like Lion's Head I growl! Yea, it is well.

JAMAICA.

Lost in a sea of ever-changing isles,
Where spicy winds and 'witching breezes blow,
Girdled with palms my fortress, sleeping, sprawls;
Deep in my cannon-mouths the flowers grow.
Brightest of jewels, in Britain's crown I dwell,
And none more fierce or true! Yea, it is well.

HALIFAX.

And I at last, O mother! Hear my voice,
Out from the icebergs of an icy main.
Restless I guard the North with dauntless guns;
Tested am I, the Lock that binds the Chain.
Mighty and grim I brood; my thunders swell
The answer round the world: Yea, it is well!

THE OBSOLETE SHIP

THE OBSOLETE SHIP

I'M old, I'm old, I'm old; I've had my day;
Here in the warships' graveyard dim I lie.
My guns have never roared in any fray;
Poor useless hulk and worn-out craft am I.
Time was when, long ago, the cheering crowds
Applauded when I joined their mighty fleet,
But now—I'm thrown away. Alas, 'tis true,
I'm obsolete.

Time was when proudly dipping to the swell,
I rode the ocean's breast a monarch grand,
My country's flag a-flying—mark it well—
The flag of Britain, my dear native land.

But now in gloom a-fettered in the tide—
The tide which once to spurn was very sweet—
I wallow, long forgotten, as I cry
I'm obsolete.

No more I steam through great uncharted seas.
No more I leave my wake in water blue.
No more I feel the sweeping, smiling breeze.
No more in tossing billows churns my screw.
Bound with my comrades ever to the shore
In one long line we roll. No more we greet
The rising sun with whistlings high and shrill.
We're obsolete.

Grey monsters dumb and sad, we rear our sides
Unconquered still, above the gloomy wave,

Useless, unheeded, mocked by many tides.
  Ah, would the very sea would be my grave—
The *open* sea—not lying empty by,
  Upon our naked decks the drumming sleet.
Oh, for a voyage, to cut the sea again!
  I'm obsolete.

Yea, obsolete, but hoping still some day
  They'll need me and I'll leave the docks again
To fling my shells into the splendid fray,
  To feel the pouring, cooling *deep-sea* rain,
To fight. Thank God, they left to me the sky;
  And water—for the kiss of it is sweet.

. . . .

The rain pours down. With poor dumb lips I cry,
  I'm obsolete.

THE HIDDEN DEATH

THE HIDDEN DEATH

(SUBMARINES)

OUT where the swinging, empty seas
Lie naked to the rain,
And sullenly the white-caps rise
To break and sink again,
When like a shroud the dark comes down
And pale the lightnings leer,
Look and look well, O drowsy watch!
The Hidden Death is near!

Mark for your lives the under-shades
That rise and fade and die!
Mark where the scared gulls, chattering, rise
And seek the muttering sky!
Mark for your lives the foaming trails
That, snake-like, cross the swell
And leap and go and come again!
Then loose the eager shell!

The chattering quick-fires shriek their dread,
The red dart spits and runs
From deck to deck, from top to top
And wakes the jibbering guns!
In vain the shivering convoys close
And shell the scornful sea!
Far down a voice has spoke the word—
The Hidden Death is free!

The blind white adder leaps to sting
And drives the poison home!
Their foolish smoke sinks shuddering down
To cloak the spluttering foam
And, mad with panic, lashed with fear,
The speared whale rears and blows
Till, seared with bellowing, blood-hued steam,
The whipped white waters close!

. . . . .

THE HIDDEN DEATH

When bare the heaving, icy seas
  Hiss with the lashing rain
And, hard upon the twilight's heels,
  The night comes down again.
And far in the watery, grumbling sky,
  The flickering lightnings flare,
Look and look well, O questing lights!
  The Hidden Death is there!

THE NEW GUARD

THE NEW GUARD

(On the launching of the Colonial Battleships, "New Zealand," "Australia" and "Malay.")

FROM the Land o' The Sun-kissed South,
From the Land o' The Dyak Drums,
From the Land o' The Drifting Sheep,
Thrilling the cables the message comes:
Mother, your children's limbs are strong,
Purses are heavy with golden gain,
Strong are our silken commerce-threads,
Tested are we for the Empire-chain.
You have guarded; we now repay—
New Zealand, Australia and Malay.

From the dark o' the shipyards grim,
  Where the derricks swing and lift
And the hammers clang and toll,
  Binding the plates as they heave and shift,
Proud of their wond'rous heritage;
  Flying their gallant banners high,
Out of the midst of the Unborn Things,
  Out of the dusk where the steamers lie
Come three vessels in stern array—
  New Zealand, Australia and Malay.

The Pride o' the Nations three,
  And sign o' the Nations' might,
With their vengeful teeth displayed,
  'Waiting the day of the Empire's fight,
Outward they go to the Seven Seas,
  Over the Long Red Route they stride,
Sentries three of their well-forged links
  Watching the road where their vessels ride,
Showing the Flag in the South to-day—
New Zealand, Australia and Malay.

THE NEW GUARD

Guard with your lives your trust,
  Under the Cross of Stars !
Keep with your strength your posts !
  Daughters you are of the mighty Mars !
Loosen your swords in their narrow
    sheaths,
  Don your harness with blade in hand ;
Time has come when you lift the weight
  From the back of the Motherland,
Changing guard at the gates to-day,
  New Zealand, Australia and Malay !

By the Land o' The Sun-kissed South,
  By the Land o' The Drifting Sheep,
By the Land o' the Dyak Drums
  In the blue Pacific that lies asleep,
Acid-test of an Empire's blood,
  Built by a people bold and free,
Three strong ships in the splendour garbed,
  Gaze on the polished floor of sea.
Well you show that you can repay,
  New Zealand, Australia and Malay !

THE TRAMP

THE TRAMP

KNOCKING through the channel-chops, bunting through the gales,
Rolling in the Biscay Bay, loaded to the rails,
Throwing smoke around the earth, grunting everywhere,
Taking any job she can, looks in need of care;
Plates *just* painted, that is all (have to hide the leaks),
Funnel all but blown away (vanishing in streaks),
Red with rust upon her hull, bottom fouled with weed,
Nearly forty years of age, but—*she takes the lead!*

"Get there somehow," is her aim, and she does it, too,
Though her cylinders are cracked, steam-pipes all ascrew,
Boilers coated thick with lime, pistons very slow,
Speed about a brace of knots in an hour or so.
Leaves the docks with liners high (fifty times her size),
Gets a dozen loads of goods, steals and trades, and buys,
Then she slips in unawares, culls the liner's load,
Yaws away within an hour, taking all the road.

Moaning feebly round the Horn, grunting round the Cape,
Pitching homeward through the swell, hatches all agape.

Any place for business, any load for pay,
So she goes and still will go till the Judgment Day.
Worrying through the winter gales, deck-planks white with snow,
Frost upon the compass-glass, pumps aclank below,
From the deck of swagger ship watch her fighting game—
Storm or fog or perfect calm, each to her the same.

Ugly as an elephant, hardly worth her keep,
See her in mid-ocean there, slowly go to sleep;
House-flag rent to ribbons, cannot make it out—
Never seen the thing before you will find, no doubt.

Funnel never working right, ventilators gone,
(Got no wireless telegraph, got no telephone),
Just a heavy cargo-boat, clumsy as a scow,
But the Might of Britain, with Her Ensign in the bow.

THE DEATH OF DARE

THE DEATH OF DARE

(From the narrative of John Kendal, one-time boatswain of the Queen's ship *Great Elizabeth*, dated 1592, and found in the cellars of a shop on the site of which once stood the "Blue Boar" Inn, Portsmouth.)

OUT in the harbour the ships were rising and falling together,
Lashed by the rain and the wind that followed after,
But in the rooms of the "Blue Boar," in spite of the night and the weather,
Was drink—an' a plenty for all—singing and shouting and laughter.
Seven Queen's Captains—along with their boat-crews—were there—
White, Smythe and Harris and Evans, Monkton and Fenley and Dare.

Each was a telling a tale, boasting of ships he had taken.
Foremost among them was Dare, who swore that he'd boarded
Eighteen 'o Spaniards that ringed him—by God! but they'd near had his bacon—
And out of their holds he had ripped a million doubloons that they'd hoarded.
"Go the Devil!" said White, "you lie, I declare!"
"Liar? Nay, liar yourself! Go, ask the bos'un!" said Dare.

"Ho, there, my buck!"—so they hailed me—"Is it the truth he is telling?"
"Ay! 'Tis the truth!" answered I, "'twas off Cadiz.
"Over their vessels we swarmed, drowning their shrieks with our yelling.
Eighteen o' Spaniards we took, though 'twas Hades."

"What did I tell you?" says Dare,
"'twas all as I said.
Even the Devil himself cannot take me—
till dead."

Up then jumped Harris, and shouted,
"Hear ye his boasting? Brave fellow!
Dare, I will lay you a wager! Wilt take me?"
"Meanst that I can't beat the Devil?"
Dare asks of him in a bellow,
"Yea, I will cover your money, if 't break me!"
"Don't be a fool!" mutters Smythe,
"Lest the Lord's wrath arise."
"Hell!" answers Dare, "Let it come!
Yea! I will take you," he cries.

There, as the wind shook the casements,
and the rain drummed its song on the gables,
Six o' Queen's Captains all told
witnessed Dare's madness.

"Come!" so he spake in the stillness,
"Come if ye can, King of Fables,
Come ye, O Satan, and board. I'll meet thee with gladness.
Out on the High Seas but come and *I* will be there!"
"Heaven protect thee!" prayed Smythe.
"Nay, but my sword will!" said Dare.

. . . . .

Up through the Channel we beat inthe teeth o' the wind that was blowing—
Anchor we'd weighed as the midnight was moodily tolling—
Out through the darkness peered Dare; says he: "There's a lantern glowing,
Shining now brightly, now dim and dipping and rolling."
Aye! Far astern I could see the light through the rain and the spray.
"By God, she is gaining!" says I, "Up, skipper, and pray!"

"Quit ye your prating," he answered, but there in the red o' the light,
Out from the great poop-lantern so feebly shining,
His face was pale as the dead as he gazed through the night.
Still as the tomb was the ship, save the wheel and the blocks awhining.
Nearer and nearer she came, as swift as a gull, through the dark.
"If't be the Devil," says Dare, "he has a swift bark."

Out of the midnight she came and speedily brought up alee us.
"All hands on deck!" says the skipper, "We'll fight 'em!"
Up came the crew all a tremble, "Mayhap if the fiends do but see us
Then," and they shivered, "the sight of our weapons may fright'em."

The red eyes aglow in the night watched
us and looked at us there.
"Come on!" yells the skipper, "Come
on! We will fight an' you dare!"

Over our decks they ran and, screaming,
they met us;
Round the skipper they pressed and
their faces were glowing;
Vainly we fought for to reach him but
they never would let us;
Brimstone they spat in our eyes from
their foul lips aflowing.
And in the midst battled Dare, swing-
ing his rapier for life,
Crossing his sword with the Devil, mad
with the strife.

Back, ever backward they beat us, rolling
their eyes as they yammered;
Hot was their breath as the hell whence
they'd hurried.

Under the glutting poop-lanterns they shrieked and they hammered;
Over the rain-sodden decks they scampered and scurried.
Wildly the skipper was fencing, to the tune of their whooping and screaming,
Trying in vain for to guard the thrusts of the Devil.

Ha! As we watched by the rail, not knowing if we waked or were dreaming,
Out like the tongue of a snake the fiend's red blade flew level.
Deep of the blood of Dare it drank, and it sang in drinking.
"God take my soul!" stammered Dare and fell on his face;
High on the wind rose the devil's delight at his sinking;
"Man the swivel!" I shouted and fought to its place.

"Nay!" gasped my mate, "it is useless,"
crossing himself in his fright;
Then, at the Sign, wildly shrieking,
back to their craft fled the Demon,
All of his 'orde behind him, racing back
into the night.
"God have mercy!" I cried. "Stand
by to the tackle, O Seamen!"
And, as they did so, the phantoms,
casting loose, swung out away
Bearing the body of Dare—aye, and his
soul, to perdition
*For he who makes game of the Devil
unto the Devil must pay.*

THE LIGHTHOUSE

THE LIGHTHOUSE

THE spindrift of a thousand storms
  Is sheathed upon my sides;
Around my billow-battered base
  Mutter a thousand tides;
The slimy seaweed dips and swings
  On every landward roll
And hangs with ropes of silky green
  The jaw-bones of the shoal.

The sun climbs up the sleeping sky
  And floods the oily sea;
He beats upon the steady swell
  And his eye is mocking me.
All through the waveless, smiling day
  I idly wait for night,
When the great gulls scream in the blinding gleam
  Of my ever-questing light.

THE LIGHTHOUSE

Across the swinging sunlit main
  The idle vessels roam.
I 'speak' the crawling outward-bound
  And beg for news of home.
The vessels answer, full of pride,
  To mock my battered form—
What care they all if I but stab
  The darkness and the storm?

The sun slides down the inky skies,
  The North wind screams a song,
And the breakers dash on my lantern-glass
  But they find me all too strong.
And while the snarling rocks I plunge
  Within my wheeling ray,
Through the snow and storm I can see the form
  Of the fool that mocks by day.

Year in, year out upon the rocks
  In dashing spray I stand,
Far from the scents and sights and sounds,
  The white cliffs of the land,

THE LIGHTHOUSE

To save the motley fleet of ships
  That ever come and go,
From the waiting demon of the shoal
  And the hungry gulls below.

Year in, year out I still will guard
  My white sword flashing high,
And in the day I still will dream
  To the ocean's lullaby.
Then when the heaving under-swell
  My fallen bulk bemoans,
May my girders roll on the conquering
    shoal
  And the seaweed drape my bones.

THE SONG OF THE CUTLASS

THE SONG OF THE CUTLASS

CUT—one! [illegible] stamp as one!
Cut—two! How [illegible] glint and flash!
Cut—three! How [illegible] ter in the sun!
Cut—four! [illegible] the whirring and the clash.
How they shine and glimmer as they [illegible] and [illegible] y ring—
The weapon [illegible] the bluejackets, the fighters [illegible] King!

[illegible] the Union Jack of Britain was for [illegible] unfurled,
[illegible] the [illegible] walls of Britain sailed the wat[illegible] the world,
When they drifted on the enemy, their gun-ports open wide,

And the smoke of battle rolled across the bloody-foaméd tide,
As the ships were locked together and the final volley roared
O'er the decks came ringing widly, "Out with cutlasses and board!"

Then it was *Bang! Clang!*—Beat them back and cut them down!
Chink! Clink!—Send them to the knee!
Clash! Dash!—Cleave them from the heel to crown!
They who dared to test the courage of the rulers of the sea.

When the arrows of the natives are a-flying through the air,
In the dark primeval forest where they builded firm their lair,
And a-crouching under cover in the trenches as they fire
Are the seamen of the Empire. As the men begin to tire

And the long attack is failing from the gloominess you hear—
"Ready? Charge!" and to the stockade they are running with a cheer.
Then it is—*Ching! Ring!* O'er the wall and at the foe!
Dash! Crash!—Force them all to yield!
Bang! Clang!—Down and down and down they go,
Soon the Jack is flying o'er that sorely-stricken field.
When the helpless ship is rolling, decks awash, upon the foe,
And the guns are grimly silent and the fires are out below,
When the enemy steams up to her and grinds her battered side
With her own undinted armour as they wallow in the tide.
Then across the loser's deck-plates, as the foe demands his sword,
Comes the Captain's voice a-roaring loud, "M'lads, stand by to board!"

Then it is—*Swing! Sing!*—Swarm upon the foeman's deck!
Chink! Clink! Sweep them back again!
Clash! Dash!—Put your foot upon his neck!—
On the conquered ship the Jack is drooping in the rain.

When the field-guns all are jamming and the rushing horse appear
Charging down upon the battery with their hated foreign cheer,
Then you'll see the blackened sailors dragging at the guns amain,
But their labourings are useless, they will only pull in vain,
For the cavalry's upon them! Comes the coolly spoken word—
"Draw your cutlasses, me hearties, we will meet them sword to sword!"

Then it is—*Swish ! Clish !* Stab the horses to the heart !
Bang ! Clang !—Drag them to your feet !
Clash ! Dash !—Rend the shattered ranks apart !—
Now the guns are rescued and the foemen in retreat.

Whether fighting 'gainst the heathen, whether fighting on the sea,
Whether fighting mighty Empires (aye, and sometimes two or three !)
Whether battling long and steady at a range of several mile,
Whether striving in the Arctic or within Equator's smile,
When the Nations rise in anger and the Nations come to blows,
You'll find the British cutlasses in action at the "Close."

THE SONG OF THE CUTLASS

Cut—*one!*—Swing it down with might
and main.
Cut—*two!* Sway the cutlass left to right.
Cut—*three!* Make the weapon ring again.
Cut *four!* Now you know the way to
fight.
It's ready for the battle when a grim
defeat you face,
To carve its way to vict'ry for the credit
of the Race.

THE TORPEDO

THE TORPEDO

NIGH a score of feet in length, sixty inches round,
Grim and cold as slimy shark, keen as coursing hound,
Made by Man and doom of Man, fearful as the Troll
Who rides the Storm-king's mighty steed (We're seekers of his toll).

One hundred pounds of gun-cotton form my deadly fire;
Five hundred golden sovereigns bright turn me out entire.
Man's mad brain has fashioned me to slay his fellow-man,
To hurl him to eternity—Yes, and so I can!

When over calm or roaring seas my
master's foe doth steal,
Within my great and savage heart a
sudden joy I feel.
I plunge forth on my voyage of death,
'mid great-eyed fish I run,
Strike I the groping hull below—the
madmen's lives are done.

Through stormy wave or tropic calm 'tis
Satan steers my course,
'Mid coral grove or Northern ice I am
the devil's horse,
In British fog or Afric mist on silent way
I go
To thrust them deep to regions old where
wait the friends below.

Swift as tiger, quiet as snake, fierce as
maddened bear,
Deadly as the wounded lion defiant by its
lair;

THE TORPEDO

Perils dark I juggle with, fiery is my
breath ;
With souls of men as trivial pawns I play
a game with Death.

*Nigh a score of feet in length, sixty inches
round,*
*Grim and cold as slimy shark, keen as
coursing hound,*
*Made by Man and doom of Man, fearful
as the Troll*
*Who rides the Storm-king's mighty steed—
(We're seekers of his toll).*

FINIS.

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