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LIFE ON BOARD THE "DREADNOUGHT"

By Frank T. Bullen in London Magazine.

QUITE recently it was my great and pleasant privilege to spend nearly a fortnight on board the "Dreadnought," not only Britain's greatest battleship, but a vessel which has surprised and considerably disconcerted all the naval powers in the world.

Few people outside of the inner circle of high scientific authorities and the men in charge of this ship can possibly form any idea of the immense and most miraculous success she is. How long she was in designing I know not; but most people know that in addition to being the most revolutionary example of battleship construction and armament, she also constituted an astounding record in the time occupied from the laying of her keel until she was commissioned—exactly twelve months.

Between seven and eight hundred men, all young and all British, all under the same discipline, and in their various positions carrying out the same great idea, living within a space a little under five hundred feet long, about eighty feet beam at the extreme width, and about forty deep. Their duties are almost as multifarious as their characters, but in a very special way they are interdependent. Here, if anywhere, is the scriptural axiom exemplified that no man liveth to himself.

Her crew, under ordinary conditions, number less than 700—692 I believe is the exact number, or about sixty less than the complement of a battleship of the "Majestic" class, with all their vast inferiority to the "Dreadnought."

One other essential factor in the life of the "Dreadnought," as compared with that of any other battleship in the navy, is the tremendous innovation as to the quarters of men and officers. The difference would appear to be trivial to a landsman, but it is really revolutionary. I allude to the fact of the rank and file being berthed aft and the officers forward, while the admiral's quarters, with those of his subordinates, are almost immediately beneath the fore bridge, or "Monkey Island" as those irreverent seamen term it, so that access to his position of direct oversight of his fleet is at once easy and swift.

No one who is not a seaman can understand the complications in terms, the strange subversive feelings among all classes of the ship's company, to which this revolutionary alteration has given rise. The older men in other ships look sourly upon the "Dreadnought," with the once sacred quarter-deck infested by skylarking sailors. No stately admirals walk round the stern; and, an unsightly square opening at the water-line right aft, through which the debris from messrooms and

galley escapes into the sea. But when once the change has been lived down, all hands agreed that the new is by far the better way. Passing on to the next class on board a battleship which claims attention, as well as highest respect, we come to the warrant officers—men who, I venture to say, are, as a class, without their peers in the world. Several new ratings have been added lately, so I am not quite sure of all of them; but there are such old-established ones as boatswain, carpenter, gunner, captain of the quarter-deck, and, now, torpedo-gunner, engineer artificer, chief stoker, signal boatswain, &c.

All these non-commissioned officers dress in uniform similar to the commissioned officers, but without stripes on the cuffs; all wear frock-coats and swords on special occasions, and all are—must be—addressed as "Sir" by their subordinates and "Mr." by their superiors.

But what I find so admirable in these men is that, although all in the very prime of life, they have literally fought their way to the front from the ranks in the face of the most strenuous competition and against countless pitfalls of temptation, one slip or error of judgment even, under the iron discipline of the navy, meaning often the loss of years of strenuous striving. Therefore, when you meet a warrant officer, remember he is a man to take of your hat. No amount of luck, or favoritism—if such a thing could be where crews so often change—or anything else save the highest qualities of skill, patience, intelligence, and pluck, can bring a man to this position.

These gentlemen—and very rough diamonds in speech some of them are—have each a cabin to themselves. They have a messroom to themselves, on the same lines as the officer of the wardroom, but, of course, on a lower scale economically. Most of them are married, and looking forward to a peaceful retirement in their old age on a sufficient pension to keep them in comfort—a pension well earned if ever money was. As might be expected, they are usually very staid, quiet men, whose conversation is mostly on service matters; indeed were it otherwise, they would not be what

they are. And now we come to the blue-jacket in all his varieties—the handyman par excellence—who, whether he be second-class petty officer or second-class boy, wears the familiar and sensible costume we all know and love.

But before taking him in detail, I must not omit mention of the warrant officer in chrysalis, as it were the first-class petty officer, such as a chief boatswain's mate or leading stoker. He has attained to the dignity of a jacket and peaked cap, and he has usually a great voice and a strenuous driving method, which, added to an almost uncanny knowledge of what every unit of the scattered crowd under his immediate charge is doing at any given moment gives you a clue to his position. These qualities have brought him thus far on his way up; and their momentum will eventually land him at the goal of his ambition, bar accidents.

But what can I say of the second-class petty officers, leading seamen, &c., with all his varying duties, responsibilities, and distinguishing marks? To the casual eye, all look alike as far as uniform is concerned, all wearing the loose blouse, loose trousers, and round cap of the seaman; but on their arms they carry mystic signs, such as crossed flags, torpedoes, crossed cannon, single cannon, &c., which spell to the initiated the various duties they perform.

I have the highest desire to be impartial, but I confess that, if pressed closely, I should say that this large and most important class are my favorites of all a battleship's personnel. They are so amazingly able, so full of vitality, so obsessed with the importance and dignity of their profession, and yet, alas! so many of them have fluctuated between leading seamen and warrant officers for years, having the cup of their ardent desire hurled from their lips time and time again because—well, because of a variety of reasons, but all too often because of the allurements of another cup, and the natural geniality that all of them seem to possess.

To know them is to love them; to watch them at their work as drill-instructors, gun-layers, in charge of telephone exchanges, switchboard-rooms, torpedo-flats, is to be filled even to overflowing with admiration of their amazing knowledge, allied to executive ability.

I have several times lately had a severe qualm when wondering where such men are to come from under new short-service system, remembering that many of these fine fellows have been upwards of twenty years in the navy, and are only now in the

prime of life. I should say that it was worth any sacrifice in reason to keep on breeding such men, for they are the string upon which the jewels of the navy are strung.

I do really believe that, besides the lightning quickness and amazing sight of the signal staff, all other occupations appear trivially easy. Watch that young seaman standing with an Admiralty pattern telescope at his eye—none of the best, by the way—and hear the messages trickling from his lips which yonder cruiser is sending by the waving arms of a semaphore on the bridge.

You couldn't see the semaphore, much less read it. At the same time, three or four strings of flags are ascending and descending, in addition to speed-signals. The mental exercise practised by every one of these seamen, to say nothing of the man in charge of them—the signal boatswain—would shame any Senior Wrangler. But look at the environment also.

Flags are devilish things to handle in bad weather, and, besides, mist and rain do not aid sight; but constant communication must be kept up—is kept up—and failure is not contemplated. It is the most fascinating sight on board a battleship, this work of the signalman.

At night the work is simplified, be-

cause all communications are made by means of flashing lamps; but even then, when you have a fleet of, say, twenty vessels, the winking eyes at each masthead seem as if they would induce madness. In this fleet we have well over a hundred vessels, all of whom must be kept in touch with the Commander-in-Chief—from our bridge. But the steady work goes on; messages pour in and out with unhalting rapidity and flawless accuracy, and an utter absence of any idea on the part of the workers that they are doing anything extraordinary.

I approach with fear and trembling the motive power of the battleship, and the huge staff of unseen workers who are responsible for it. At the head of them comes the chief engineer, who is here a commander in rank, and has under him several engineer officers, who are inmates of wardroom and gunroom, according to their rank. They are highly trained in practice and theory, but the note of their service is responsibility.

Immediately beneath them comes the artificer—"tiffy," in naval parlance—who not only drives the engines, but, being a skilled mechanic, must needs repair them in an emergency. There are many thorny questions concerning him, the discussion of which would be entirely out of place in this article, which are mat-

ters of hot debate and vexed controversy wherever working engineers do congregate.

One thing I can say whole-heartedly, and in this every officer will agree with me, which is that the "tiffy" is the linchpin of the ship, and that remembering his onerous duties, he is all too poorly remunerated, while his prospects are in no wise commensurate with the wonderful work he does. I may not enter upon any controversial questions here, but I yield to no one in my appreciation of the work of the A. E.; and in all his legitimate efforts to obtain adequate recognition and pay he has my very best wishes.

Now for the lighter side, in one sense only. Such a community of stalwarts needs feeding, well and promptly. Hence a great array of cooks and domestics, who pursue their calling in cheerful indifference to whatever else is going on. Blast of bugle or shrill of bo'sun's mate's pipe trouble them not; only the gravest emergency, such as fire or sinking, can turn them from their arduous duties of supplying the powder of the best engine of all—the men. They form a little community of their own, the peculiar feature of which is, to my mind, that they may, and do, occupy their little niche on board this huge and complicated machine afloat for many

months, and yet know nothing about her, outside of their own immediate sphere of action.

To this civilian category also belong the wardroom attendants, but they are nearly all marines, with drill and other duties to perform as well as the sick-bay attendants, fine, intelligent men; and the paymaster's staff, whose duties are simply clerical.

All of these folks have their own aims in life, which are purely civil. They are on the sea, yet not of it; and, although they do mix with the seamen at times, it is only as oil and water mingle, for in every essential detail they are wide as the Poles asunder. But in time of battle all these non-combatants have their places assigned to them, and they must perform essential duties in aid of the fighting-men. At certain times they are drilled in those duties, much to their disgust and the dislocation of their work, for the drill is of a very stringent and onerous character, all the more so because of its infrequent occurrence.

I have left myself with little space in which to deal with the military element, the Royal Marine Light Infantry and Royal Artillery, bodies of which are to be found on board of every battleship.

The first named are soldiers pure and simple, and, however long they may be at sea, never lose their essentially military character. They fraternize far more freely than they used to do with the seamen; and I believe the idea of the authorities tacitly fostering antagonism between the two ranks has entirely passed away with the apparent need for it. But the Royal Marine Artillery, who handle the big guns, although they, too, are soldiers, seem to be an intermediate class between the seaman and the marine.

They are certainly held in the highest and admiration by the seamen, for their great ability and smartness in doing the same kind of work; they are highly esteemed for their prowess in all forms of sport that may be indulged in on board ship, and also for their skill and endurance at the oar.

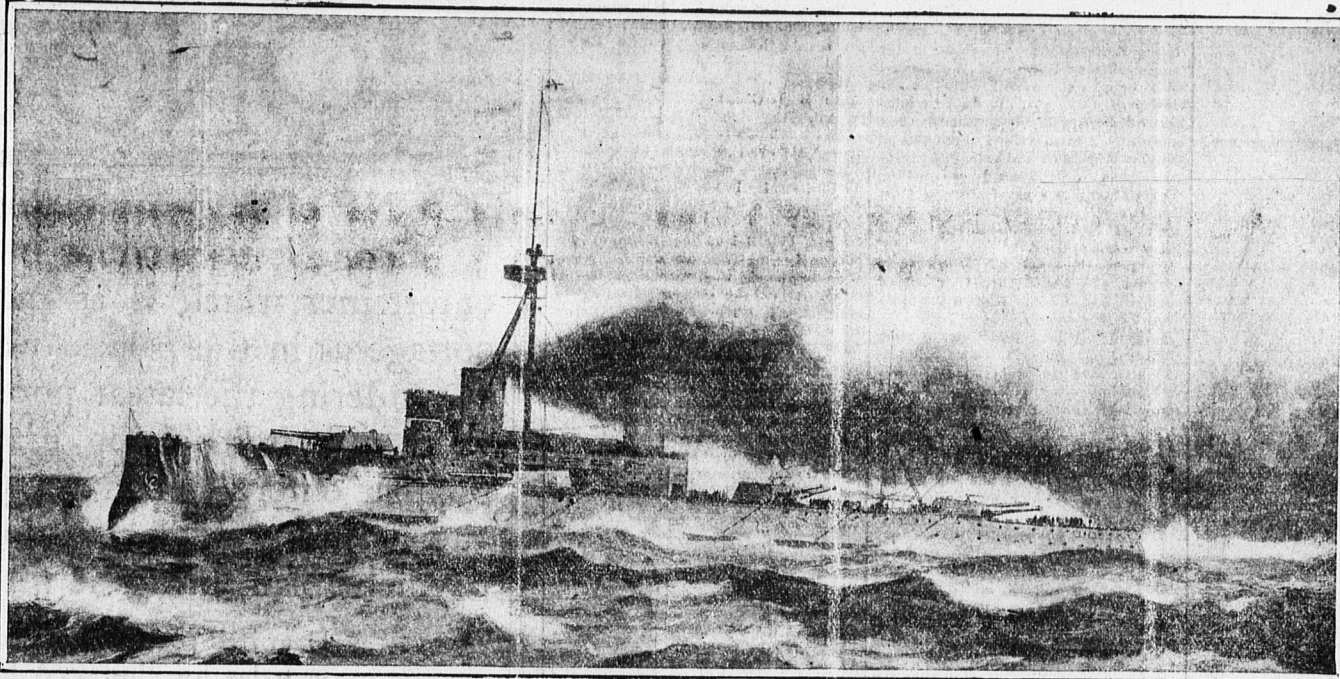
But I must not fail to seize a few lines wherein to mention that most necessary but obviously far from popular body of men who wear on their sleeves the ominous letters N. P. (navy police.)

The crew of a battleship is an essentially law-abiding community. To whatever branch a man may belong, he has continually drilled into him not only the absolute necessity of discipline, but its essentially beneficial character, not only for himself, but for all concerned. Yet where several hundreds of men are pent up together, even if the supposition were possible that they were all angels in point of disposition, there are bound to be offences against perfect discipline, breaches of law and order, omission to perform certain duties in the proper way and at the proper time, which must be marked and punished. No such minute discipline is or could be possible elsewhere; here it is essential.

philosophy and theology may differ, we all agree in this, that the heart and centre of Christianity is the personal Christ. Being a Christian consists not in signing articles of faith and adhering rigidly to views and dogmas but rather in the acknowledgment of Christ's Lordship and the personal surrender of heart and life to Him.

Our little systems have their day. They have their day and cease to be. They are but broken lights of thee, And Thou O Lord art more than they. Lift up the personal Christ; so that He can be seen and His presence felt, and mankind will be drawn toward Him.

(Continue on Page 2.)



ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE CHRIST

The Many Attractive Points In The Life Of The Redeemer Which Appeal to the Chivalry of Human Beings

Sermon By Rev Geo. E. Ross, Pastor Of Zion Church, Charlottetown

power was to be world wide in its scope; and in view of Calvary and the all sufficiency of the atonement He was to offer, the world's redeemer proclaimed to the listening multitude and to the church of all succeeding time, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me."

Please to consider, then, the attractive Christ and the meaning of this remarkable statement from our Lord's own lips. Has history shown that He has made good such a claim? Is Christianity winning its way by the proclamation of the Gospel? Is the church sufficiently conscious that the secret of her power must ever depend upon her faithful presentation of Christ to the world. These are questions of vital importance. I believe the church needs to be reminded today of two great facts. (1) That Christianity is Christ, and (2) That her supreme aim of winning souls can be accomplished only as she is presenting Christ in such a way that all may see Him. Whatever may be our intellectual difficulties, however our views of doctrine and our systems of

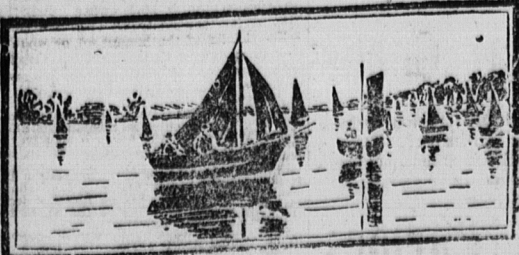
John 12:32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me."

These words were spoken by our Saviour on a memorable occasion. It was the last week of His ministry and He had come up to Jerusalem to attend the passover.

Among the multitude that thronged the Holy City at such a time were certain Greeks. Whether they had been attracted thither by the commercial opportunities afforded by being devout men were interested in matters religious, we do not know. Suffice it that they were there and sought an interview with Jesus. That interview

was cheerfully granted, and the words of our Saviour immediately after indicate that He regarded the presence of these seeking entiles as most significant. The Wise Men from the East had worshipped at His cradle; these Gentiles from the West had now come to do homage at His Cross.

For Christ it was a vision of the consummation of His redemptive work. Isaiah's prophecy was being fulfilled, "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied". East and West were destined to find their meeting point in Him. Jew and Gentile alike were to be partakers of Divine grace. His saving



The Guardian Talks Daily to Almost Half the People in this Province