

HOW TO OBTAIN NAVAL CADETSHIPS.



NOTWITHSTANDING the levelling spirit of the age, as manifested in the rules now in force for the admission of candidates to almost every branch of the Government service, where competition is now the only mode of admission, the Navy still continues to be a close service, and my Lords of the Admiralty have succeeded in maintaining barriers against the admission of the "hoi polloi," such as have been thrown down by the pressure of public opinion in the sister service, the army. Now, as formerly, admission to the commissioned ranks of the Royal Navy is obtained only by nomination, and the patronage is dispensed by the Lords of the Admiralty, who very properly take into consideration the services of the applicant's father or other near relatives; and hence, by a reference to the columns of the Navy List, it will be seen that honoured names that have figured in the naval history of this country before and during the great Revolutionary War are still to be found in its pages; and we trust that it may ever be so, for the boy who is nurtured from his cradle among nautical associations, and whose earliest recollections are associated with tales of naval prowess, is sure to strive to tread in the footsteps of his ancestors. Hence it comes about that we find in our navy, in all ranks, from the cadet to the Admiral, such names as Milne, Hope, Dacres, Maitland, and a host of others whose proud ancestral privilege it is to serve their country in that profession whose traditions, it may safely be averred, are unique in the length and brilliancy of the roll of victories, and achievements in the more peaceful domain of nautical science.

The latest Admiralty regulations for the entry of naval cadets were issued by the Board in September, 1874, and are in force until revised or cancelled. On an average, eighty candidates enter the service every year; but in 1875 the number passed in was ninety-three. The candidates must first of all—on the principle of catching your hare before you can cook it—procure a nomination to compete, which is very difficult to get; and we have heard of an instance, in the recollection of a friend, when a lady offered £2,000 for one. These nominations are in the gift of the Lords of the Admiralty, but Admirals on appointment to command stations have two placed at their disposal, and post-captains commissioning a ship have one in their gift. The following requirements are necessary before the name of a youngster can be entered as a candidate for the entry examinations, which are held twice a year, generally in June and December, at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, under the direction of the Admiralty Examiner.

The first requirement is as to age. Last year the examination for entry was held on the last Wednesday in November; but the appointment as cadets of the successful candidates was dated from the 15th of January following, on which day their age was required

to be "not less than twelve nor more than thirteen and a half years." The number of nominations necessarily varies according to the requirements of the service; but at the examination referred to above, which may be taken as a fair average, the number of cadetships competed for did not exceed forty, and the number of nominations was limited to eighty, so that only one-half of the competitors could enter the service.

Before competing, every candidate was required to have passed the medical examination according to the prescribed regulations, and must have been found physically fit to serve in the British Navy in any part of the world; and it need scarcely be said that no body of men are so subject to such sudden changes of climate and temperature, or to greater hardships, often for lengthened periods, than British naval officer. Our colonies, which are scattered all over the world, must be visited; and our interests, which are not less world-wide, require to be watched. To-day, perhaps, the ship to which a young cadet has been appointed may be ordered off to take part in an expedition similar to that just so admirably executed up the Congo river; and within a few months, on the outbreak say of war with Russia, the same ship may be directed to proceed to the White Sea, or Kamtschatka, to blockade Archangel or Petropaulovski. Each candidate is therefore required not only to be in good health, but also to be "free from any physical defect of body, impediment of speech, defect of sight or hearing, and also from any predisposition to constitutional or hereditary disease or weakness of any kind, and in all respects well-developed and active in proportion to his age." Rejection at the medical examination entails final exclusion from the navy.

The candidate is required to produce: 1st, a certificate of birth,* or declaration thereof made before a magistrate; 2ndly, a certificate of good conduct from the masters of any schools at which he may have been educated during the two previous years—or, if educated at home, from his tutors, or the clergyman of the parish in which he resides; and, 3rdly, a certificate of good health. The following are the subjects for the examination under the direction of the Admiralty Examiner, together with the marks assigned to each head:—

(a) To read a passage from a modern standard English author with intelligence	50
(b) To write English from dictation correctly, in a legible hand	100
(c) To read, translate, and parse a passage from French, for which the aid of a dictionary will be allowed	100

They will also be required to have a satisfactory knowledge of—

(d) Arithmetic, as far as proportion and vulgar and decimal fractions	150
(e) Scripture history	100

No candidate will be qualified to compete unless he obtains at least four-tenths of the marks assigned to each of these subjects, and 250 marks in the aggregate. Having passed the above qualifying or test examina-

* A certificate of baptism will not be accepted.

tion, the candidates are further examined in any three of the following subjects they may select—or four, if drawing be one :—

}	Elementary mathematics, viz.—	}	300
	Arithmetic: Miscellaneous examples		
	Algebra: As far as easy simple equations of one unknown quantity, and easy fractions		
	Euclid: Book I. to Prop. xxxii., inclusive		
(g) French: More advanced, including translations of English into French			100
(h) Latin: To read, translate, and parse passages from Latin authors into English, and to translate any passages from English into Latin			200
(i) English history			100
(k) The outlines of modern geography			100
(l) To read, translate, and parse a passage from German, Italian, or Spanish, and to render an English passage into that language			100
(m) Elementary drawing, freehand, and from models			100

No marks amounting to less than one-sixth in a voluntary subject will be counted towards the total. Candidates whose age does not exceed thirteen on the day of examination, and who obtain the number of marks prescribed for passing, but who may not be successful in the competition, are allowed to compete once again at the next examination, without undergoing a fresh medical examination, although they may then be over age. No candidates are allowed to compete more than twice, and any one whose age exceeds thirteen on the day of examination is not permitted a second chance. Further, it is a rule that any boy failing to pass the test will be disqualified for a second examination. There is also a stringent rule bearing on the case of a boy who fails to appear for examination through illness or any other cause, which, indeed, carries the same penalty as failure to pass the first time. Thus, it is enacted that should a candidate fail to appear at the examination after he has obtained a nomination, he will not be allowed to present himself at any future examination without a fresh nomination, except in the case of illness certified by a physician or surgeon, and approved by their Lordships; in which case non-appearance will have the effect of unsuccessful competition, entitling the candidate to present himself at the following examination only.

We will suppose the boy has passed these tests, which may be regarded as only preliminary. He is now sent on board the training-ship *Britannia*, stationed at Dartmouth, and is called a cadet, like the youths of the sister academies at Woolwich and Sandhurst. During the period that he is on board the *Britannia*, an annual payment is required from the cadet's parents or guardians of £70, which is to be remitted half-yearly in advance to the Accountant-General of the Navy. But the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty reserve the power of selecting from among the candidates nominated at each half-yearly examination, a number, not to exceed ten, being sons of officers of the Royal Navy, Army, or Marines, or of Civil Officers under the Board of Admiralty, with respect to whom the annual payment for the two years in the *Britannia* is fixed at £40 only. In selecting these their Lordships have regard solely to the pecuniary circumstances of the parents or guardians of the cadets.

Cadets who join in January, and who pass an unsatisfactory examination at Midsummer, are warned that they will be discharged at the end of the following term if they do not show sufficient improvement, and those who pass unsatisfactorily at a subsequent examination are at once sent to their homes. On the admission of the cadet to the *Britannia*, the parent or guardian is required to provide outfit as under the regulations in force, and to sign a declaration to the effect that he shall be immediately withdrawn on receipt of an official intimation of his being considered unfit for the Royal Navy.

The following are the regulations respecting cadets while under training:—They are allowed four terms—two in each year—to complete their course of study; at the expiration of which they go up for final examination. The terms are about from the 1st of February to the 15th of July; and from about the 31st of August to the 20th of December; and the vacations extend over six weeks at Midsummer, six weeks at Christmas, and a week at Easter; the dates of commencement of vacation depending upon the completion of the examinations by the Director of Education. The friends of the cadets must be prepared to receive them during the Midsummer and Christmas vacations, but at Easter they can remain on board the *Britannia*. The payments, £35, before the commencement of each term, are to be made according to instructions which will be given in the half-yearly claim from the Accountant-General upon the parents or guardians, and cadets will not be considered as entered for tuition until the amounts due have been received. All travelling expenses will be advanced by the Paymaster of the *Britannia*, who will charge the same to the cadet's personal account at the end of each term. As they have a weekly allowance, and all expenses attending their amusements are paid for by the ship, their friends are requested not to give them any money except on joining, or on their return from the vacations, and then the amount must not exceed ten shillings. Such money as may be required by a cadet for any special circumstances is advanced by the Paymaster under the authority of the Captain of the *Britannia*. Cadets are not permitted to open an account with tradesmen, and parents and guardians are requested to pay no bills that may be sent them. Other regulations have reference to infectious diseases, and parents are particularly requested to communicate with the Captain of the *Britannia* in such cases; and the Admiralty do not permit boys to bring gold watches or chains with them, only silver watches being allowed on board. The following is the

List of Articles required for a Naval Cadet on joining Her Majesty's Ship "Britannia."

A Midshipman's Sea Chest complete, with name in full on top, engraved on plain brass plate:—Length, 3 ft. 6 in.; breadth, 2 ft.; height, 2 ft. 3 in. (It is requested that the Chest may be at Dartmouth seven days previous to the cadet's joining.)

- 3 Pillow-cases.
- 1 Hair Mattress, 5 ft. 6 in. x 2 ft. 9 in.
- 1 Hair Pillow.

- 2 Blankets,
- 1 Counterpane, } 6 ft. 6 in. x 4 ft. 6 in.
- 3 Pair Sheets,
- 1 Uniform Jacket,
- 1 do. Trousers, } Superfine.
- 1 do. Waistcoat,
- 1 do. Cap, peak half turn down,
- 2 Working Uniform Suits (one of thick flannel, one of pilot cloth).
- 1 Uniform Working Cap, peak half turn down.
- 12 White Shirts.
- 12 Collars.
- 6 Night Shirts.
- 12 Pair Woollen Socks.
- 3 White Serge Trousers, well shrunk.
- 6 Pair Drawers.
- 3 White Serge Shirts (with collars to turn down).
- 2 White Waistcoats.
- 12 Towels.
- 7 Flannel Waistcoats.
- 2 Black Silk Neckties.
- 2 Pair Braces.
- 3 Pair strong laced Boots, with thick soles.
- 1 Clothes Brush.
- 1 Sponge.
- 1 Carpet Bag.
- 1 Clothes Bag.
- 12 Pocket Handkerchiefs.
- 1 Pair elastic-side Oxford Shoes, with strong soles.
- 1 Brush and Comb.
- 1 Tooth Brush.
- 1 Nail Brush.

Pea Jackets are not to be supplied, as the thick Working Jacket can be worn over the Uniform Jacket, if necessary.

Clothing to be distinctly marked with the cadet's name in full.

NOTE.—Trousers to be made without pockets, and only one pocket on the left breast of the Jackets of the two Working Uniform Suits.

School Books and Instruments will be supplied in the *Britannia* as required in each Term.

The Admiralty have framed regulations to meet the case of colonial cadets in regard to entry, passage to England, and other matters. Colonial cadets are examined in the flag-ships abroad, and will, if they pass, be entered as supernumeraries for victuals only, and sent home in any man-of-war or transport about to leave for England, to join the *Britannia*. In the event of no ship being available, passage to England, including mess, at the public expense, is provided for them by mail packet or by private ship—the latter being preferred where the packet fares are high. They do not count time or receive pay until they join the *Britannia*, and arrangements are required to be made that, if possible, they may arrive in England a short time before the commencement of a term—i.e., before the 1st of February or the 31st of August; and parents are requested to arrange for the payments on their account being received by the Accountant-General prior to the cadets' joining the *Britannia*.

Having passed the final examination, the cadet becomes an officer of the British Navy. He is sent on board a sea-going ship, where he receives pay, though this is so small that his parents or guardians are required to make him an allowance of £40 per annum.

In the case of navigating midshipmen or cadets, who form a distinct branch of the service, certain

deductions are permitted by the Lords of the Admiralty, in the allowance of £40 required to be paid by parents or guardians, to midshipmen and cadets serving at sea. Their Lordships, by a circular dated the 4th of November, 1872, directed—

1. When navigating cadets or navigating midshipmen are undergoing the third year of their training in sea-going ships, the sum payable to the Accountant-General of the Navy may, upon the claim being made for the second moiety of the £40, be reduced at the discretion of the parents to £20, provided the reduced amount, conjoined with the officer's pay, be found sufficient to cover all mess and other necessary expenses, otherwise any amount overdrawn will be afterwards claimed of the parents.

2. It is to be understood that £20 is to be paid at the commencement of the year.

3. The sums established for the third year of training are to be treated as private allowances, and paid accordingly to the young officers.

4. It is particularly requested that the sums established for the third year of training, and afterwards as private allowances, may not be exceeded, my Lords deeming it undesirable that the young officers should have the command of any larger sum of money; but if the parents or guardians of any officer desire that he should have greater means to enable him to visit places of interest abroad, &c., they may remit an additional sum, not exceeding £10 per annum, to the Accountant-General of the Navy, to be placed by him under the control of the captain of the ship in which the young officers are serving, to be expended for the purpose stated, and at such times as the captain may direct.

5. It is intended that, in the absence of any objection from the parents or guardians, the private allowances should be paid concurrently with full pay.

The following is the regulation uniform of midshipmen and naval cadets:—

MIDSHIPMEN.—Coat.—Blue cloth, single-breasted, with nine notched holes on each breast and three on each cuff and pocket-flap, with buttons to correspond, lined with white serge, stand-up collar, with a white turn-back on each side of the collar, with notched hole and button.

Buttons.—The same as other officers.

Sword.—No sword, but a dirk according to pattern.

Dirk-belt.—The same as the lieutenants' undress belt, but with frog instead of slings.

Hat.—The uniform cap only.

NAVIGATING MIDSHIPMEN.—The same as midshipmen, but instead of the white turn-back, a buttonhole of blue twist at each end of the collar, with a corresponding button. Nine buttons, placed by threes, to be worn on the breast of the coat.

NAVAL CADETS.—The same as midshipmen, but instead of the white turn-back, a buttonhole of white twist on the collar, with a corresponding button.

NAVIGATING CADETS.—The same as naval cadets, but a buttonhole of blue twist instead of white on the collar. Nine buttons, placed by three, to be worn on the breast of the coat.

A midshipman on the full pay of his rank receives from his country the munificent annual income of £31 18s. 9d., being exactly 1s. 9d. a day, for exposing his life and limbs in the public service. A naval cadet receives £18 5s., which is 1s. per diem precisely. Both these ranks are subject to a deduction of £5 when receiving instruction from a duly qualified naval instructor or other officer on board his ship, and yet the nominations to naval cadetship are eagerly sought for by the aristocracy and monied classes. May it ever be so, and may the love of the sea, our native element, be an ineradicable passion in the breasts of all British lads.

C. R. LOW, (late) I.N.

