

faith in guarantees for a year or two years; because a flimsily made watch may go for a year or two tolerably well, and yet, before you have worn it five, may have cost you twice its value in repairs, and prove a torment and a deluder instead of an honest friend and guide. In making your selection, do not be led by ornament—by fancy backs or dials, or “jewelling in ten holes.” Ten holes may be jewelled for a guinea, and the watch be none the better for it. With a respectable maker, the absence of needless ornament is often a concomitant of superior work.

Having bought your watch, remember that it is worth taking care of. Wind it, as nearly as possible, at the same time every day, preferring the morning to the evening. Avoid sudden jerks in winding, and do not turn the watch while you are turning the key, but hold it firm and steady. Keep the key in good condition, free from dust and cracks: it is not a bad plan to plug its orifice: a particle of dust or rust in the key may get into the watch, and put you to the expense of an extra cleaning. Keep the key in your bed-room, not in your pocket.

When a watch is hung up, it should be supported and *at rest*: when laid horizontally, it should rest on a soft substance for support, or the motion of the balance may generate a pendulous motion of the wheels, causing a variation in time.

When a watch varies from atmospheric influences, or from some change in the mode of wearing it, the hands may be occasionally set right, but the regulator should not be touched; if the watch gains or loses continuously, then the regulator should be altered; but it should be delicately handled, and moved but a little at a time. In setting the hands, it is best to set them forwards. In watches set or regulated at the back, the glass should not be opened at all. The watch-pocket should at all times be kept free from dust and accumulations of every kind.

Two years is quite long enough to keep a watch without cleaning. If you cannot consign it for that purpose to the hands of the maker, intrust it only to some respectable and responsible person. The very best watches are often ruined by the hands of blundering and incapable workmen, while even a bad watch may be made, by the treatment of a clever artist, to perform tolerably well.

Lastly, take a lesson from your watch. That little machine, if you have taken the above advice regarding it, will be found constantly doing its duty. Do you the same; work on with your life's work as that does, “unhasting and unresting.” Let it teach you regularity and punctuality; so shall you not be ashamed to look it in the face, and be enabled, when your hours are all numbered, to give a good account of the time intrusted to your keeping.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE SEAS.

The grand truth embodied in the majestic lines—

“Let us be back'd with God, and with the seas,
Which he hath given for fence impregnable,
And with their helps alone defend ourselves;
In them, and in ourselves, our safety lies,”

seems to have been a heartfelt conviction in the

breasts of all true Englishmen, long centuries before the poet was born.

King John, whom history has generally branded as a very unworthy monarch, had some redeeming kingly qualities—not the least of which was his determined assertion of England's sovereignty of the seas. He ordered his sea-captains to compel all foreigners to salute his flag by “striking” their own national flags, and, probably, by also lowering their topsails, (as was the practice at a subsequent period,) in acknowledgment of England's maritime supremacy. If any foreign ship, even though belonging to a friendly power, refused compliance, it was to be seized, and adjudged a lawful prize. This and other facts lead to the conclusion that John only enforced an ancient claim to dominion of the seas, which had been asserted and enforced occasionally time out of mind.

Edward III, during his wonderfully long reign of fifty-one years, was a most jealous asserter of his sovereignty of the seas, over which he claimed a judicial power. Dr. Campbell says that Edward, “in his commissions to admirals and inferior officers, frequently styles himself sovereign of the English seas, asserting that he derived this title from his progenitors, and deducing from thence the grounds of his instructions, and of the authority committed to them by these delegations. His parliaments, likewise, in the preambles of their bills, take notice of this point, and that it was a thing notorious to foreign nations that the king of England, in right of his crown, was sovereign of the seas.” In old “Hakluyt's Voyages” is printed a very curious poem, called “De politia conservativa maris,” supposed to have been written in the time of Edward IV. It contains a number of separate chapters, each of which is full of most valuable and instructive information concerning the commerce of England with various countries. The unknown author, who must have been a man of very extensive information in his day, urges most strongly his countrymen to maintain inviolate the sovereignty of the seas, as the only means to preserve their prosperity and safety.

In the reign of Charles I, both the French and Dutch began to express great jealousy of the British claim to dominion of the seas, and Hugo Grotius endeavoured very learnedly to prove that Albion had no better natural right than Holland, or any other maritime nation, to such a title. Our own equally learned and eloquent Selden retorted by his celebrated treatise “Mare Clausum.” We need not quote any of his arguments, which are generally profound, and, if not always impregnable to impartial criticism, are at any rate patriotic and singularly striking and ingenious. Suffice it that the general conclusion to which he arrives is conveyed in one very impressive sentence: “That they (the English) have an hereditary, uninterrupted right to the sovereignty of their seas, conveyed to them from their earliest ancestors, in trust for their latest posterity.” Mainly with a view to enforce his claim to the sovereignty of the narrow seas, did Charles I endeavour to provide a naval force sufficient to overawe both French and Dutch, and therefore issued his writs for levying

"ship-money"—a most fatal undertaking as concerned himself; for, as every reader knows, this arbitrary measure (however honourable its original motives might have been) was the beginning of that deplorable alienation between the king and his subjects which resulted in the great civil war, and eventually cost the hapless monarch both his crown and his life.

In 1635 the king, by his secretary of state, addressed a long and deeply interesting letter of instructions to his ambassador at the Hague, in order to enable the latter to explain and justify to their "High Mightinesses" his naval preparations, and their meaning and objects. We will extract a few passages illustrative of our theme: "We hold it," saith King Charles, "a principle not to be denied, that the king of Great Britain is a monarch at land and sea, to the full extent of his dominions; and that it concerneth him as much to maintain his sovereignty in all the British seas, as within his three kingdoms; because, without that, these cannot be kept safe, nor he preserve his honour, and due respect with other nations. But, commanding the seas, he may cause his neighbours, and all countries, to stand upon their guard whensoever he thinks fit. And this cannot be doubted, that whosoever will encroach on him by sea, will do it by land also, when they see their time. . . . The degrees by which his Majesty's dominion at sea hath of later years been first impeached, and then questioned, are as considerable as notorious. . . . But withal, considering that peace must be maintained by the arm of power, which only keeps down war by keeping up dominion; his Majesty, thus provoked, finds it necessary, for his own defence and safety, to *reassume and keep his ancient and undoubted right in the dominion of the seas*, and suffer no other prince or state to encroach upon him, thereby assuming to themselves or their admirals any sovereign command, but to force them to perform due homage to his admirals and ships, and to pay acknowledgments as in former times they did."

The Protector of the Commonwealth proved himself quite as jealous of maintaining the power and privileges of the navy, as any of his kingly predecessors, and he did what not one of them had ever effected, namely, made a treaty with the United Provinces (the Low Countries), by which it was solemnly stipulated "that the ships and vessels of the United Provinces, as well those fitted for war as others, meeting any ships of war of the said Commonwealth in the British seas, shall strike their flag and lower their topsail, in such manner as had been any time before practised under any former government." This was in 1654. After the restoration, Charles II renewed the treaty in 1662, and in 1667, in almost precisely the same terms as the above; and at the conclusion of the Dutch war, in 1673, in the fourth article of the treaty of peace it was expressly stipulated that if any "ships or vessels of war, or others, or whether single or in fleets, shall meet in any of the seas from Cape Finisterre to the middle point of the land of Vanstaten in Norway, with any ships or vessels belonging to his Majesty of Great Britain, whether those ships be single or in greater num-

bers, if they carry his Majesty of Great Britain's flag or jack, the aforesaid Dutch vessels or ships shall strike their flag and lower their topsail, in the same manner, and with as much respect, as has at any time and in any place been formerly practised," etc. The reader will bear in mind that the Dutch were at that time the most powerful naval power next to Great Britain. The treaty appears to have confirmed the dominion of the latter beyond what might properly be called the "narrow," or "British seas," including, as it did, all from the south-west of Portugal to a cape in Norway.

During the reigns of the four Stuart kings, as well as under the protectorate of Cromwell, the "Mariners of England,"

"Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze,"

did indeed jealously "guard our native seas," and assert and maintain their country's sovereignty thereof. In 1652, two fierce actions were fought on this very score. "On the 14th of May, Commodore Young fell in with a Dutch convoy, escorted by three ships of war, from whom he civilly demanded *the usual honours to be paid to the English flag*. The Dutch commander positively refused to comply, giving as a reason that he had express orders from the States-General not to pay those honours which the English exacted from their ships in the Channel. Commodore Young, on this refusal, fired into the Dutch, which brought on a smart action; but at length the Dutch ships struck, and, *after paying the compliment*, were allowed to proceed on their voyage." Only four days later, Blake himself and Van Tromp had a far more serious encounter on the very same score. Van Tromp and his fleet stood towards Dover, off which Blake was lying with fifteen men-of-war, and paid no respect whatever to the English flag. Blake instantly fired, from his own ship, three unshotted guns at the Dutchman as a reminder of his want of respect. Van Tromp retorted with a broadside. "A most furious engagement instantly began. At first the whole of the Dutch fleet directed their fire at the English admiral, but he was soon bravely supported by the rest of the ships, and Commodore Bourne joining at the same time with eight sail more, obliged the Dutch to bear away, though still superior in number, and seek shelter at the back of the Goodwin Sands, after having been most severely mauled. The action lasted from four till nine at night. One of the Dutch ships was taken, and another sunk."

In a volume of the "Naval Chronicle," for 1807, the sovereignty of the sea is described as being "an actual and peculiar use and enjoyment of the sea itself, and the performance of *all the functions* of a sovereign upon it; such as prescribing rules of navigation to those who frequent it, punishing delinquents, protecting others, and receiving from all that homage and advantage which are due to every lawful sovereign." The writer proceeds to state that the dominion of the sea entitles the "lawful possessors" to six several prerogatives. The first two refer to the right of fishing, etc., and the residue we will give at length.

"3. To impose tribute and customs on all mer-

chant ships and fishermen fishing and trading within the limits of the sea that is subjected to any particular dominion.

4. The regular execution of justice for protecting the innocent, and punishing the guilty for all crimes committed within the extent of such sea-dominions.

5. To grant free passage through any such sea to any number of ships of war belonging to any other prince or republic, or to deny the same, according to the circumstances and occasion of such passage, in the same manner as any prince or state may grant or deny free passage to foreign troops through their territories by land, even though the prince or state to whom such ships or land forces belong *be, not only at peace, but in alliance* with the prince or republic of whom passage is desired.

6. To demand of all foreign ships whatsoever within those seas to strike the flag and lower the topsail to any ships of war, or others bearing the colours of the sovereign of such seas."

The latest example of an English commander insisting on a salute to his flag, which we have been able to find, occurred in the month of June, 1769, when "a French frigate having anchored in the Downs, without paying the usual compliment to the British flag, Captain John Holwell, who was the senior officer lying there, in the 'Apollo' frigate, sent an officer on board to demand the customary salute; the French captain refused to comply, upon which Captain Holwell immediately ordered the 'Hawk' sloop of war to fire two shot over her, which being done, the French commander thought proper instantly to salute."

Many of the greatest of our poets have eloquently alluded to the sea-sovereignty of their native island, ramparted with tidal waters. Who does not remember the truly magnificent lines:—

"This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it as the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house
Against the envy of less happy lands!

England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
Of watery Neptune."

The popular strain of Thomson's "Rule Britannia" gives an emphatic assertion of Britain's naval greatness. No poet, however, has so celebrated the floating bulwarks of Britain, and the "Hearts of Oak" who man them, as Campbell. His marvellously spirit-stirring lyric, "Ye Mariners of England,"* has no rival in its intense patriotism.

In conclusion, suffice it that for a considerable time the claim of England's sovereignty of the seas, so far as it includes special homage to our flag, or anything resembling a judicial supremacy over the ships of other nations, within the limits of the narrow (or any other) seas, has been a dead letter. But we can well afford to dispense with what was at best a somewhat questionable sort of shadowy

* It is a curious and interesting literary fact, that Campbell wrote this in a foreign land, viz. at Ratisbon, on hearing of war being declared against Denmark. Some portion of it is said to have been previously roughly sketched out, owing to his admiration of the music of "Ye Gentlemen of England." His splendid lyric, "The battle of the Baltic," soon followed.

honour, for we know that we yet retain the substantial maritime supremacy which alone enables us to rank as the foremost nation of the world—

"Missress, at least while Providence shall please,
And trident-bearing Queen of the wide seas!"

to quote the noble lines of the patriotic and Christian poet, Cowper. Well will it be for us to constantly bear in mind the vital truth that the same great poet proclaimed:—

"They trust in navies, and their navies fail:
God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail!"

NEW CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.

VANITY OF AUTHORS.

"Vanity makes a fool of the wisest."

WHEN Benvenuto Cellini, the poet, painter, sculptor, jeweller, warrior, and what not, wrote his "Memoirs," he committed an unconceivable vanity. He seems to have been in constant controversy with the world about his merits. Like Goldsmith, he ever feared lest his "eminence" should get overlooked, and therefore "his instrumentation is marred by the preponderance of the brass." He is always at the great trumpet, blowing for the bare life. Everybody who opposes him is wrong, and not only so, but, as it were, by the nature of the case, altogether evil-minded and wicked. His unbounded confidence in his superiority over all his contemporaries is ludicrous in the extreme. Some of his doings are so absurdly impossible that the reader, weary of laughter, grows angry. "The braggart," he exclaims, "was no doubt a great man in some things; but the greatest of all men and in all things! it is too much for belief or patience." As it is indeed.

Derrick, the poet, through the interest of his friends, was made master of the ceremonies at Bath. In this situation he displayed his fondness for pomp and show. His dress was always fine, and he kept a footman as fine as himself. When he visited London, his footman always walked behind him; and to show that he was his servant, Derrick generally crossed the streets several times, that the man might be seen to follow him.

La Place, the great French astronomer, was exceedingly vain of the orders which had been presented to him for his scientific renown. He had the star of the order of the Reunion affixed to his dressing-gown.

Boswell was always earning some ridiculous nick-name, and then "binding it as a crown unto him," not merely in metaphor, but literally. He exhibited himself, at the Shakespeare Jubilee, to all the crowd which filled Stratford-on-Avon, with a placard round his hat, bearing the inscription of "CORSIKA BOSWELL." In his Tour he proclaimed to all the world, that at Edinburgh he was known by the appellation of "PAOLI BOSWELL." He was so vain of the most childish distinctions, that when he had been to court, he drove to the office where his book was printing, without changing his clothes, and summoned all the people there to admire his new ruffles and sword.

Queen Elizabeth was one of the vainest of the