

MOUTH OF PORTSMOUTH HARBOR.\*

## THE QUEEN'S NAVY.

BY LIEUT. F. HARRISON SMITH, R. N.

SINCE the time of Henry VII., the old town of Portsmouth, in England, has been the headquarters of the British Navy. To English boys the place is familiar through stories and biographies of sea heroes. But to American boys a brief description of Portsmouth will not be without interest. The town is built on the east side of the harbor, an extensive piece of water running from the English Channel into the south coast of the county of Hampshire. Along its east shore and extending year by year farther north, is the dock-yard. Let us climb the signal-tower and take a view of the surrounding sights. The yard, with its numerous docks, basins, sheds, factories, and houses, looks like a settlement of no little extent; but beyond, through the generally smoky atmosphere, can be seen the town and its environs.

This vast expanse of brick and mortar gives one some idea of the necessities which attend so large an establishment as the dock-yard.

The thousands of workmen employed form a colony in themselves, and they occupy the parts of the town toward the north and east; while along the coast in the same direction, the town of Southsea stretches away for two or three miles. It is here that the officers — naval, military, and civil — for the most part reside, and the view in this direction, embracing as it does the well-laid-out recreation grounds, the piers and their crystal pavilions, the canoe-lake and other ornamental waters, is most pleasing.

Looking south, we see, over the fort-studded waters of the Solent, the Isle of Wight — the garden of England. Continuing around the circle of our view, we come to Stokes Bay, where a huge iron-clad is tearing along on the measured mile at the top of her ponderous speed, doing her utmost to establish a reputation for swiftness. She is closely followed by an arrow-like torpedo-boat, which gradually gains on her, yard by yard. But the torpedo-boat is not matching her speed with that of the monster. She is out only for trial of her deadly discharge-tubes, and so, just when the race is most exciting to the onlookers at the top of the tower, the little boat shoots off in a direction opposite to that taken by the huge iron-clad.

Glancing to the west side of the harbor, we see the Naval Hospital at Haslar, a fine pile of buildings, which appears capacious enough for all the officers and men of the British fleet, and not alone the sick and wounded. Near by is the victualing-yard at Gosport, with its great bakeries and stores of clothing and provisions.

Along the north shore of the harbor are the Portsdown hills, the sky-line of which is broken by threatening forts, and an occasional chalk-quarry, while Nelson's monument crowns the ridge. Right below us, in the harbor, are three venerable men-of-war. The largest on the right is the "Duke of Wellington," the flag-ship of the Commander-in-Chief of the port. This vessel served a commission at sea in the Baltic, during the war against

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Russia in 1854, and afterward. She is nearly the last of her race, as iron soon afterward began to fulfill the pretended prophecy of old Mother Ship-ton, the soothsayer, which ran :

“ Iron in the water shall float,  
As easy as a wooden boat.”

Next comes the most treasured relic of her naval struggles which Great Britain possesses. This is the venerable and venerated “Victory,” the flag-ship of Lord Nelson, his battle-field and his death-bed. On the 21st of every October, the old ship is decorated with garlands in memory of that day in 1805, when the great and glorious battle of Trafalgar was so bravely fought and so dearly won.

The third old ship — always an object of interest to strangers visiting Portsmouth — is the “St. Vincent,” a training-ship for boys. The lads were aloft actively engaged at drill when we saw them.

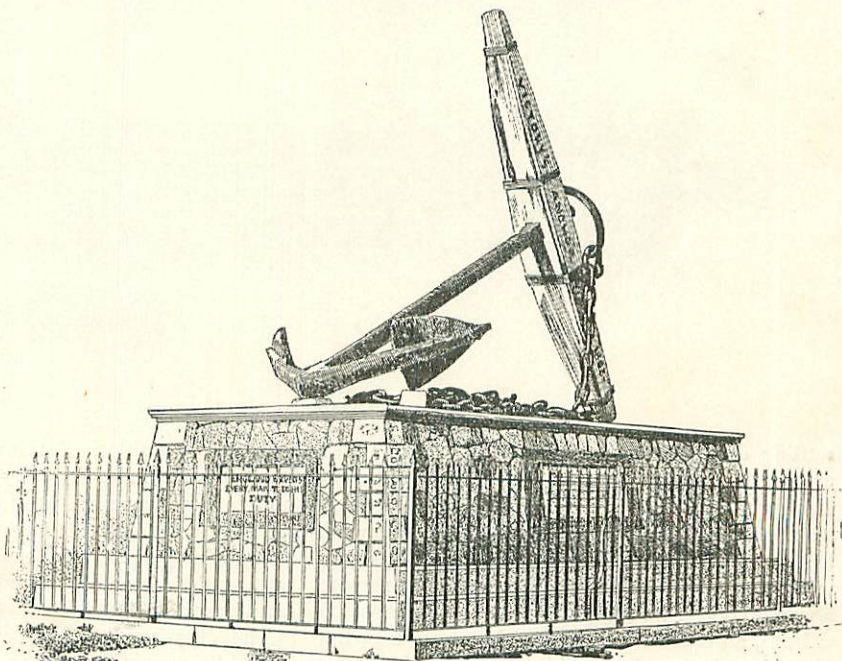
Nor should we forget the quaint parish church, built in the twelfth century, with its peal of bells stolen by an admiral from Dover some hundreds of years ago, and then brought round in his ship to Portsmouth; and its old organ saved from the wreck of a vessel which was conveying it to Spain.

In July, 1887, being already familiar with the surroundings of England's great naval center, we entered the dock-yard to see the rapid preparations to bring forward, for commission, the ships and torpedo-boats about to be assembled for review by the Queen, on the occasion of the Jubilee, on July 23d. It should first be understood that a ship is said to be commissioned, when her commander has been commissioned to man and prepare her for service at sea. Other ships are in “reserve”; the first reserve containing ships nearly ready for sea service, and so on downward, till a dismantled and

empty ship, requiring extensive repairs to her hull, new boilers, and a general refit of her machinery, is placed in the fourth class.

The ships then preparing were the “Inflexible,” “Collingwood,” “Edinburgh,” and “Imperieuse”; a fast torpedo vessel, the “Fearless”; nineteen small iron gunboats, and nearly thirty torpedo-boats. As the little torpedo-boats had already been manned, and were just home from a cruise, they were awaiting only the return of their officers and men from the depot-ships, and could be made ready in about two hours.

It was about nine o'clock on the morning of the 1st of July. The Inflexible, Collingwood, and Edinburgh were to be commissioned. The captains and most of the officers had arrived in Portsmouth the night before, and at the hour named the ensign was hoisted at the staff, and the captain's whip-like pennant was run aloft to the truck of the mast with all due solemnity. For some min-



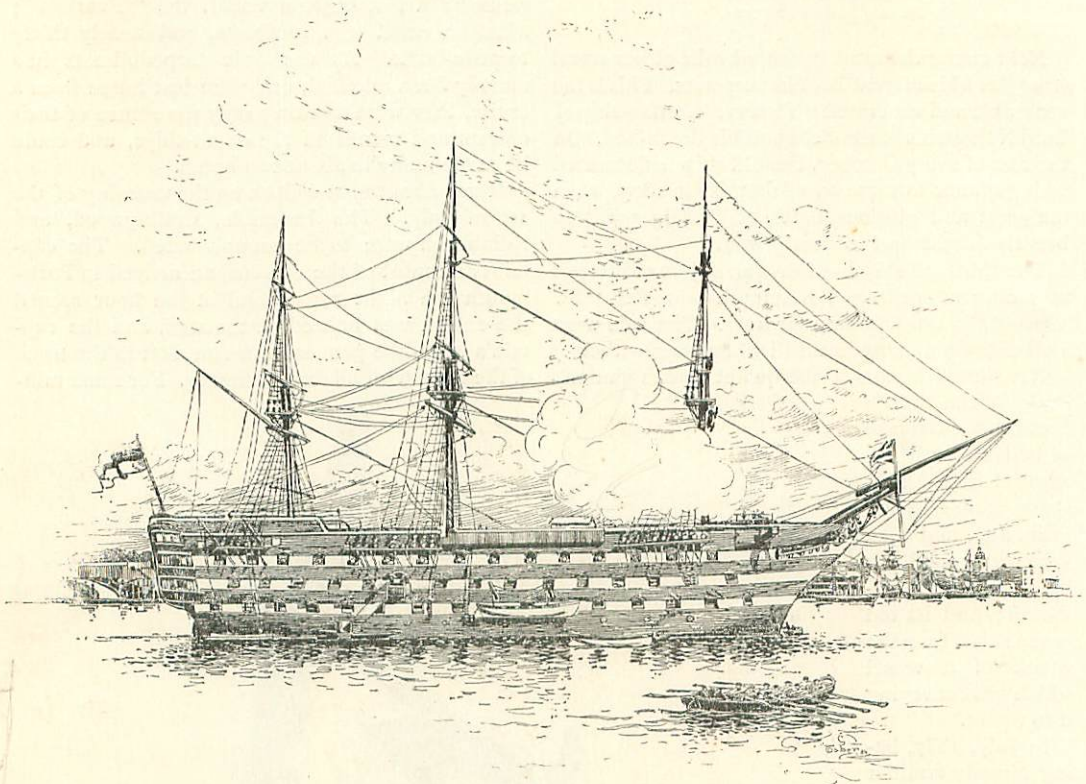
THE “VICTORY’S” ANCHOR: ERECTED UPON A MEMORIAL PEDESTAL ON THE BEACH AT SOUTHSEA, OVER THE SPOT WHERE NELSON EMBARKED FOR HIS LAST VOYAGE.

utes there was a continued fire of greetings from old friends, who stumbled upon one another on the deck of the same ship after long years of separation. But soon the bustle began; the men carried

below the bags containing their kits, the hammocks were stowed in the boxes, and for some time everybody, from the captain down to "Jack-in-the-Dust," or the steward's small boy, was busy

outfitters, who take care of them until their owners return — perhaps after many years have elapsed.

The stowage of the cabins was soon complete enough to enable their tenants to occupy them,



LORD NELSON'S FLAG-SHIP, THE "VICTORY."

settling down—a brief process with officers who are well accustomed to it, and whose worldly belongings seldom exceed a fair load for a four-wheeled cab. The officers and their servants work together with a will to stow into tiny cabins gear which in chaotic disorder would appear to require a warehouse for its reception.

Here, an officer, with coat and vest off, is giving his personal attention to his valued knickknacks, pictures, and mirrors, while he directs his servant as to the stowage of his clothing, which is rapidly transferred from the unwieldy chest, or packing-case, which refused to go through the cabin door, into the chest of drawers under his bunk; for, on board ship, space is so limited that an economy Goldsmith thought worthy of note in the ale-house of the "Deserted Village"—"a bed by night, a chest of drawers by day"—is almost the rule. But by noon, most of the empty cases are on their way from the dock-yard to the stores of the various

and the disposition of the many ornaments was left till some more leisurely hour. Meanwhile, a no less busy scene has been enacted on the men's mess-deck. The bags having been stowed in the iron racks prepared for them, the men are busy putting their broad-brimmed straw hats and their ditty-boxes overhead.

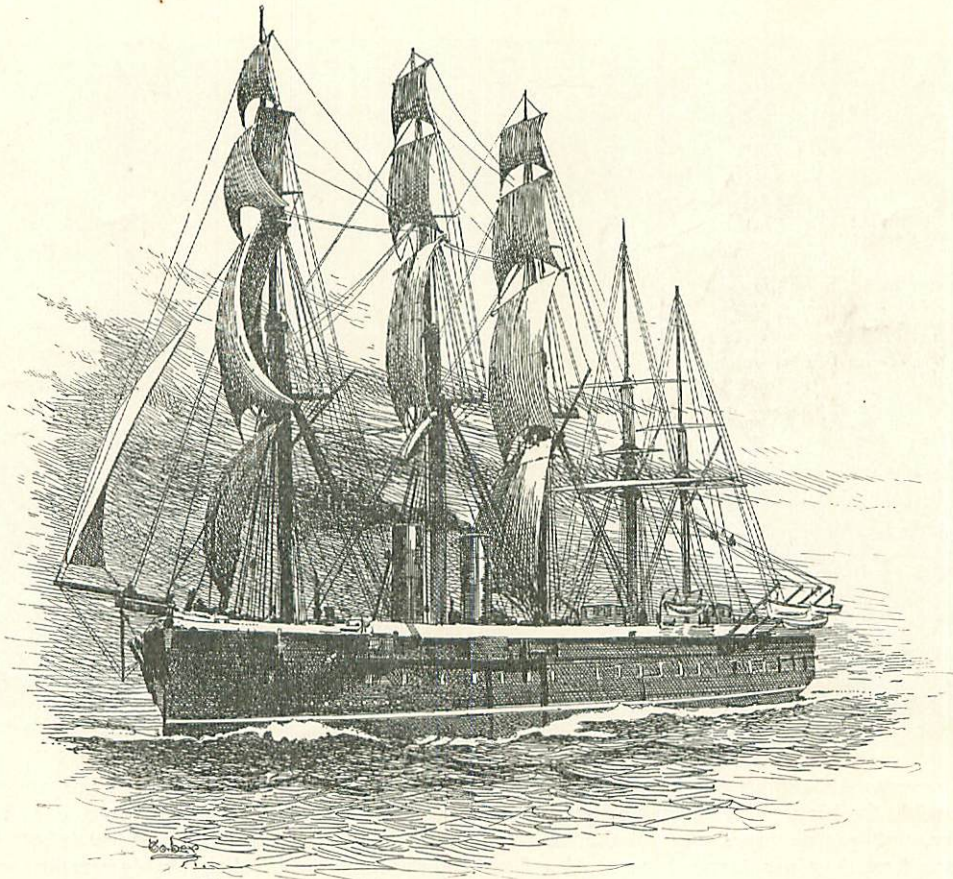
The ditty-box itself is certainly worth looking into. It is a plain deal case, with lock and key, and comes in for its share of scrubbing and cleaning with the same unsparing severity as the shining deck. It contains all the treasures which a sailor can carry about with him. Now it holds but little, its contents being only the few articles necessary to the tailoring which each man must do to keep his clothes in order, a book or two, a few home treasures, and maybe a watch and chain. Occasionally a promising young seaman may have gone so far as to provide for the likelihood of his being promoted to the rating of boatswain's-

mate during the commission, and have brought with him a silver call or whistle, perhaps the present of his wife or sweetheart. Before the end of a commission, the ditty-box probably will be full of letters from home, and of all bright days in the life of a sailor on a foreign station, the brightest are those on which the mail arrives.

But over the ditty-box, we are forgetting the men themselves. They have been told off to the different messes in which, generally speaking, they will live for the term of the ship's commission, though many may change, from time to time.

boxes divided off by a low bulkhead, or partition, from the open deck, the messes consist simply of a plain oblong wooden table, hanging at one end from the ship's side, and supported at the other by iron legs. A bench runs along each side of the table, and a few racks, to hold plates, basins, and other crockery in security when the vessel knocks about at sea, complete the furniture of the mess.

The food of each mess is prepared, day by day, by the member who in turn is "cook of the mess," and by him it is taken to and brought from



THE "AGINCOURT" FROM THE "MINOTAUR."

Either they leave the ship, or they can not agree with their messmates, or they wish to be in the same mess with their chums or "townies," and so are exchanged from one mess to another for the mutual satisfaction of all parties. Excepting those of the chief petty-officers, who live in one or more

the galley, where it is cooked on the stove by the ship's cook. The cook performs this duty for all the messes, except those of the officers, who have their own galleys. The men of each mess are responsible for its cleanliness, and on Saturday, the great cleaning-day, tables and benches

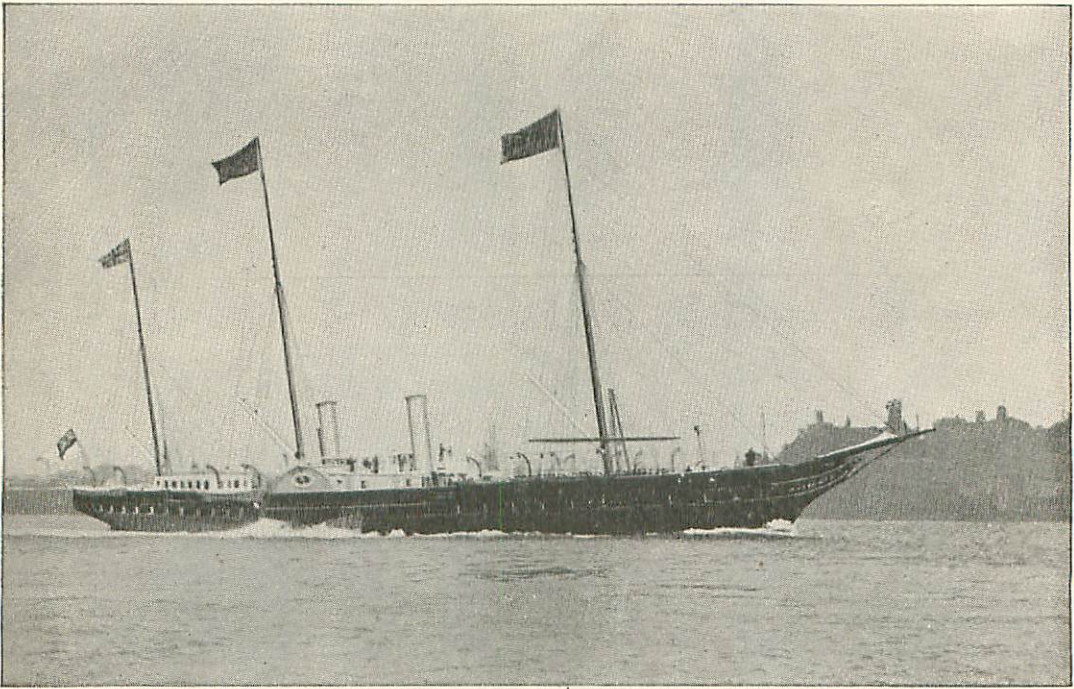
are placed overhead, that the decks may be thoroughly scrubbed.

But when noon arrives, the sentry strikes eight-bells with a vigor peculiarly characteristic of marine sentries at this hour, and immediately there is a clattering of tin dishes, plates, spoons, knives, and forks, above which is heard the shrill piping of the boatswain's-mates' calls, as they pipe to dinner with their long-drawn notes and tremolos. During the busy days of commissioning, the time granted to the men for their meals is short, and as, until after the evening quarters, or muster, their only chance to smoke is during meal-hours, very little time is lost in conversation at dinner,

officers in charge, and the gunnery and torpedo lieutenants; and whenever anything is amiss, the fact is reported to the captain, who attends to supplying the deficiency.

For some days this goes on. Carts are continually arriving from the different stores in the yard with rope, canvas, and the thousand and one last articles required. At last the ship is ready to receive her powder and shell, to have her compasses adjusted, and to run a steam-trial in charge of her own engineers and stokers.

When her stores are shipped she is hauled from alongside the dock-yard wall and made fast to a buoy in the harbor. Or she goes out of harbor and takes



THE ROYAL YACHT, "VICTORIA AND ALBERT."

nearly everybody wishing to secure as much time as possible for his pipe. When the dinner-hour is over, out go the pipes and all the men (or "hands," as they are termed) are told off to various duties; but to-day the bugle sounds to exercise at "general quarters," which means, preparing for action. When a ship has been some time in commission, this is a matter of a very few moments; but now the gun-gear has to be tested, and examinations must be made to see that all articles and stores for working the guns, providing powder and projectiles, or for flooding the magazines in case of fire, are supplied.

So everything is minutely inspected by the of-

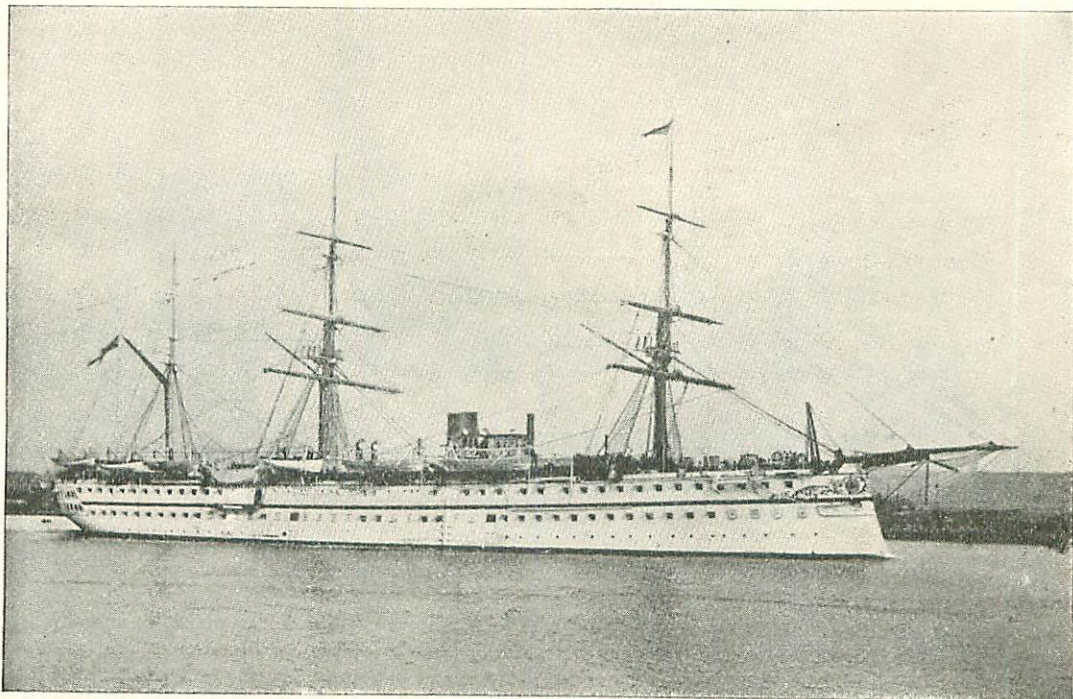
ficers in charge, and the errors of her compasses ascertained and recorded, or corrected, and runs her trial trip. There may be a few defects to be repaired, after which she probably goes for a week's cruise in the Channel to test her sea-going qualities and familiarize her officers with her behavior. Finally, she leaves England for her station abroad.

Such is an outline of the method of commissioning a ship; and though the ships for the Jubilee Review were to be commissioned for only a short time, yet they went through this whole routine. It was intended that they should be fitted as if for general service; and, indeed, their efficiency was severely tested in the complicated maneuvers.

Shortly after being placed in commission the big ships went on a cruise to Portland, sixty miles to the westward of Portsmouth, and there they remained until their return to Spithead to take position for the Review. Meanwhile the smaller vessels, gunboats and torpedo-boats, were being prepared; but as the work of commissioning these

their anchorage after the Review. As we go out toward the fleet we pass close to a little squadron of six trim sailing-brigs, which are tenders to the boys' training-ships at Portsmouth, Portland, and Plymouth. Pretty, toy-like craft they seem in the foreground of the vast fleet of grim war-vessels.

Our torpedo-boat dashes across the bows of



INDIAN TROOP-SHIP.

small craft is comparatively light, it was left till a later time. By the 18th of July, all the ships were ready, and two days afterward the magnificent fleet was moored in its formation. Thousands of spectators daily thronged the beach, the piers, and the frequent excursion-steamers which ran up and down the lines of war-vessels. After dark, practice with the electric lights began, in order to insure the success of the illuminations which were to follow the Review.

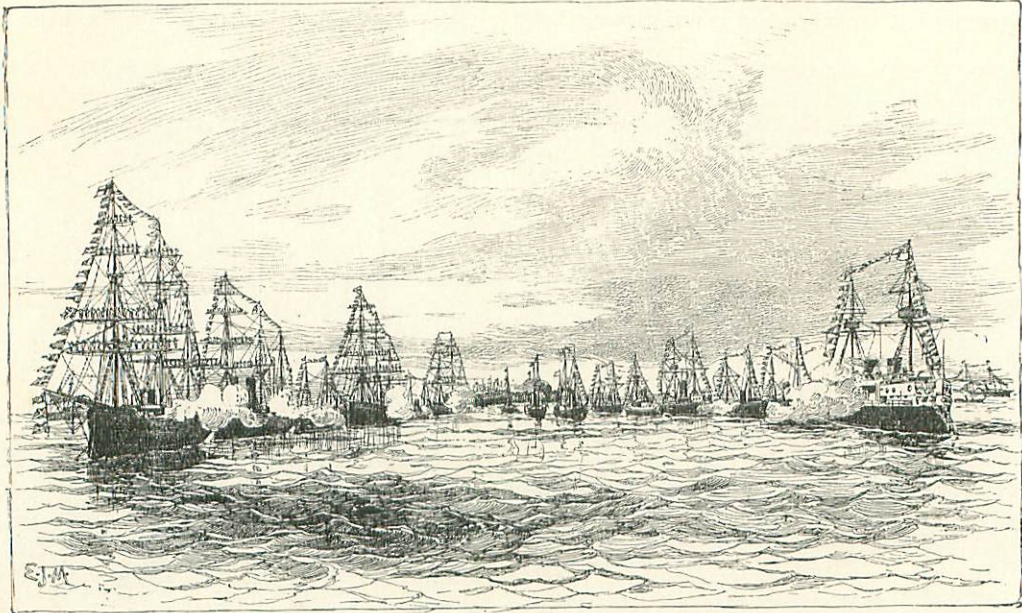
All the fleet being in position, activity and order took the place of bustle and confusion. A glance at the chart (see page 26) shows us that the big ships were moored in three squadrons, of two divisions, or lines, each. Between the northern lines of the squadrons — called Second Divisions — and the shore, were five flotillas composed of smaller turret-ships, gunboats, and torpedo-boats. This arrangement was made in order that those ships which were to maneuver in company might be placed together and be in convenient positions for leaving

two old-fashioned turret-ships, "Prince Albert" and "Glatton," which lead the lines of D Flotilla; and we pass on under the stern of the "Agincourt," and board the "Minotaur," which is flying the flag of Vice-Admiral Sir William Hewett, V. C. These two ships, each having five masts, are just alike, so that a visit to one will make us acquainted with both. At the gangway, we are received by an officer who willingly sends a quartermaster over the ship with us, as his own duties do not permit him to leave the upper deck during his watch. From the raised poop we have a splendid view of the opposite line of ships, while dead astern of us is a confused forest of masts, funnels, and superstructures. Through the gaps between the ships of the other line we can see the torpedo-boats, but we must inspect them more closely on our return trip to the harbor. Looking forward, the bows of the ship seem to be a tremendous distance away, while the intervening deck, unincumbered by big guns, looks like a ball-room floor — for which, our

guide informs us, it very frequently has to do duty.

The admiral is on shore, so, under supervision of the sentry, we take a walk around his cabins.

man's writing-table is situated. This has a thoroughly business-like air, in contrast with its more romantic surroundings. Electric bells connect the desk with every part of the ship, summoning by a



ENGLISH NAVAL REVIEW. PROCESSION OF ROYAL YACHTS REVIEWING THE FLEET.

We expected something very spacious for such a "monarch of the sea," but we find one compartment almost monopolized by a big 12-ton gun, ponderous, but harmless in comparison with the more modern and lighter pieces of ordnance which we shall see later. On one side of this gun is the admiral's sleeping-apartment, a comfortable place, like any gentleman's dressing-room. On the opposite side of the gun are the dining-tables, adapted for the admiral and his staff, or for larger parties, "for 't is n't often as the admiral does n't have a lot of people to dinner," remarks the quartermaster. Then we step into the after-cabin, which is decorated with pictures of ships which the admiral formerly commanded, and with curiosities from almost every land under the sun. There is a wonderful shield and silver gauntlet, and numerous spears and robes, all presents from the King of Abyssinia, for the admiral is a member of the ancient Abyssinian Order of Solomon. There is a splendidly mounted horn from Norway; there are trophies from the Soudan, West Africa, the Cape of Good Hope, and China, in such profusion that we seem to be paying a visit to a museum.

Many photographs of friends occupy the rest of the available space, except where the great

touch officers of the staff, sentries, or signalmen; while baskets of papers, blue-books, and piles of letters and papers lie about.

Around the stern are glass doors leading out to a small veranda, called the stern-walk, which looks pleasant in this July weather. But it would not be a comfortable place during a bitter winter night in the English Channel.

Passing out of the cabin, and down a steep ladder, we reach the after part of the main-deck. Behind a screen of red curtains are a stove and some easy-chairs of cane or wicker-work, for this is the officers' smoking-room.

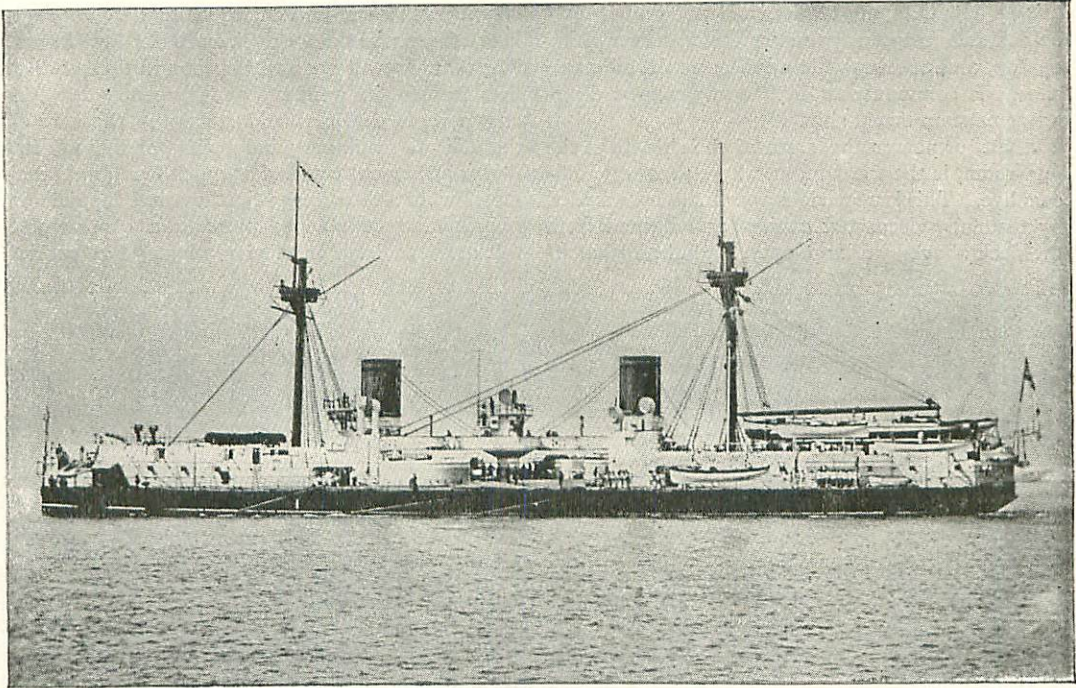
For some little distance forward,—or toward the bows,—on each side, are cabins or offices, and then we come to the monster guns which seem to reach almost up to the deck above. We wonder how it can be possible to live while they are fired in so confined a space; but it is said that the noise is less deafening inside the vessel than outside. Between the guns are the men's messes, as already described. There is no room beyond the space necessary for moving about. Cooking-stoves, huge chain-cables, and mess-places for the chief petty-officers, occupy every available inch of the middle part of the deck, while the guns and tables in the

men's messes fill up the sides, leaving only a narrow gangway.

We now dive down a dark hatchway near the bows, by means of an iron ladder, and coming to the lower deck we find the cells, capstan, and electric-light machinery, racks for the men's bags, and scores of other things. On this deck, and below it, the ship is divided off into water-tight compartments, by means of iron walls or bulkheads. We pass through them by heavy iron doors, which can be closed at a second's notice. But we are now nearly below the level of the water outside, and the only light we get is from the hatchways and some small windows called scuttles, which are pierced

pieces nearly the whole length and breadth of the room, but a piano is just squeezed in at one corner. In the bulkhead, at the opposite end of the gun-room, is a small sliding window, which leads into the pantry. This window is incessantly opening and shutting, while the miscellany of articles passed through it is perfectly astounding.

A gun-room steward must be a man of many talents, or his life will not be worth living. The calls on his temper are outnumbered only by the demands on his stock, and he must learn to brook the imperious tone of the childlike voices which command him, half-a-dozen times a day, to "bring me my jam, and look sharp about it; my boat is



THE "INFLEXIBLE."

through the ship's side. In some places the side is of great thickness, owing to the armor and its backing. In this old ship the armor is only five and a half inches thick, while that of the new "Inflexible" is twenty-four inches thick, and has a backing of twenty-five inches.

In one compartment we find the "gun-room," the mess-place of the younger officers. This is a dingy cave, lighted now by a dim oil-lamp; but the young officer who welcomes us informs us that at night, when the engines are working, the room is well lighted by electricity. Against the ship's side are lockers for books and sextants, while hooked on the bulkheads are numerous telescopes, swords, dirks, and a hundred other articles. A table occu-

called away." Often enough the order is drowned in a babel of other shouts from a multitude of throats simultaneously yelling for various extraordinary articles of consumption — cocoa, biscuits, tobacco, or fruit. Sometimes the babel is silenced by a stentorian shout from a sub-lieutenant, who subdues the tumult by authority, and takes advantage of the lull to enforce his own claim for a cooling draught. But in response to the bewildering outcries, the steward gives a cheerful "Aye, aye; one moment, sir!" and before that brief interval has expired, a dozen different articles are thrust through the window with a precision only acquired by years of practice.

Just outside the gun-room are the chests of its



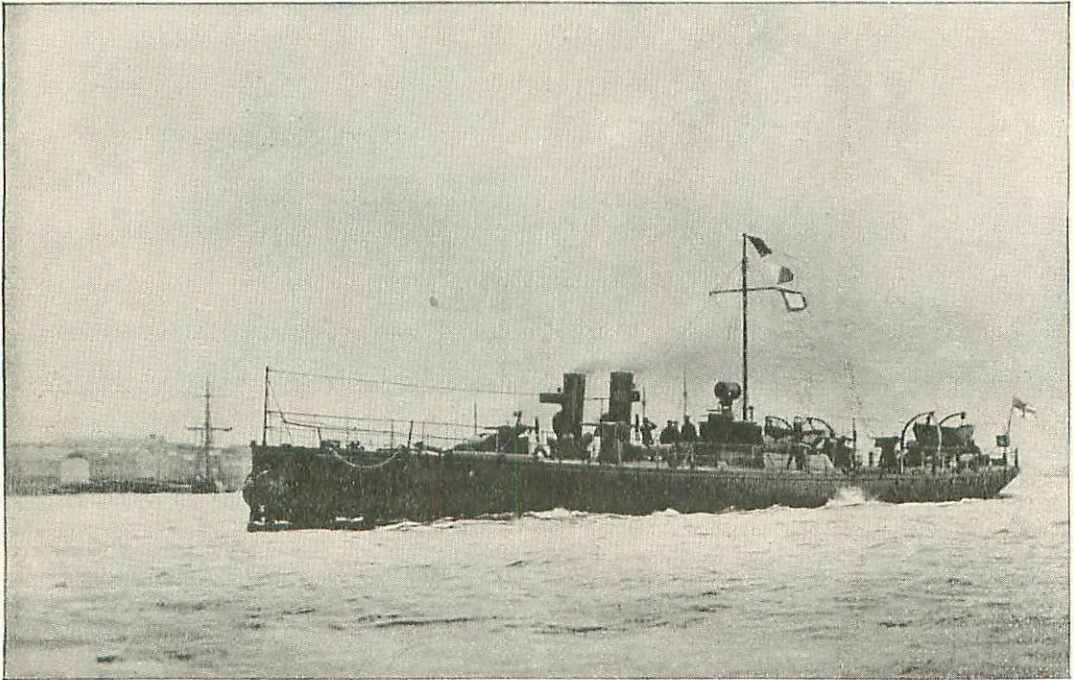
occupants, for the young officers have no cabins. Each chest contains all the worldly possessions of one officer, which, thus packed, are as inaccessible as they well can be. Immediately under the lid are three or four shallow trays. One of these is fitted as a washstand, with basin, mug, soap-dish, and receptacle for tooth-brushes. Another till is a sort of loose box for everything; while a third contains a miscellaneous collection of neckties, handkerchiefs, pipes, money, and a limited stock of jewelry. Under these trays, and packed more or less tidily, according to the tendencies of the marine servant who "looks after" each young gentleman, are his uniforms, suits of plain clothes, boots, linen, and articles of haberdashery. After this explanation, my readers will not find it difficult to understand why the expression "everything on top, and nothing at hand, like a midshipman's chest," is commonly applied to any chaotic disarrangement on board ship.

Abaft, or nearer the stern of the ship than the gun-room, is the ward-room, where the senior officers live. This is a spacious apartment surrounded by tastefully decorated cabins, and lighted from the deck above by a large open skylight, or hatch-

seniors to be much more appropriate to gun-room society.

From our inspection of the *Minotaur* we returned to the torpedo-boat which was to convey us through the lines, and passing down between the port and starboard divisions of the three squadrons, A, B, and C, we turned to come up between the lines of the flotillas of gunboats and torpedo-boats. Being anxious to pay a visit to a torpedo-boat, we selected No. 81, which, being one of the largest boats, was in H flotilla. She is one hundred and thirty-five feet in length, and capable of steaming eighteen knots, or sea-miles, an hour. This is equal to a speed of more than twenty land-miles. Her crew comprises a lieutenant, who commands, a sub-lieutenant, a gunner, an engineer-officer, and sixteen deck and stoke-hold hands. The men are all specially trained in their duties, the seamen in gunnery and torpedo-work, the engine-room artificers and stokers in the care of the delicate machinery and boilers of these boats.

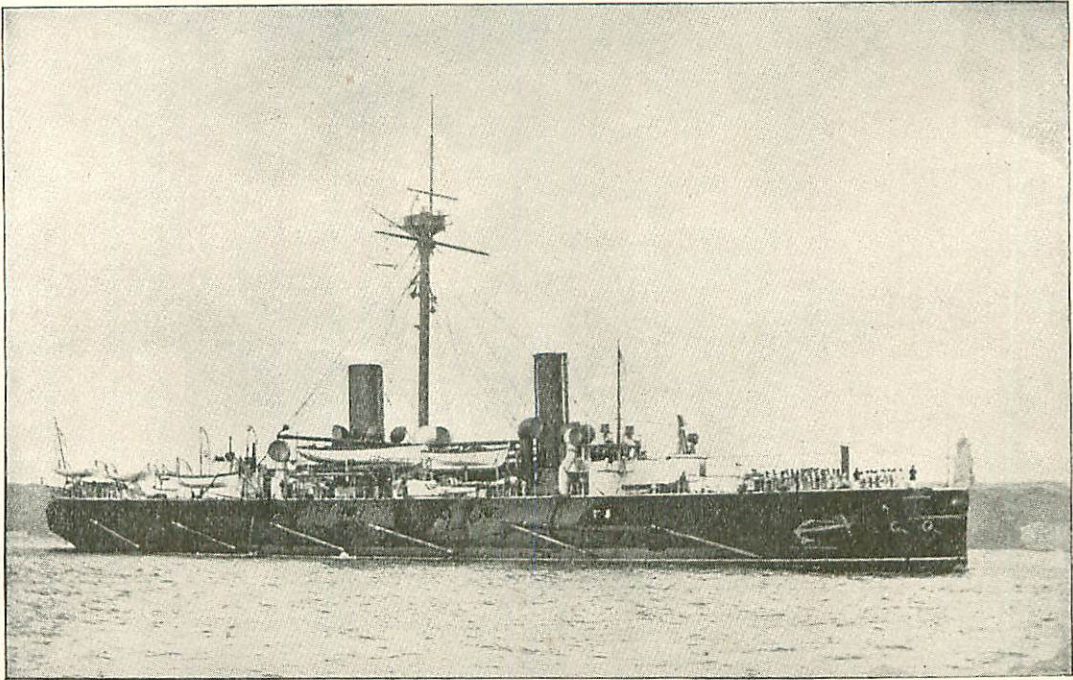
Her armament consists of quick-firing machine-guns, which throw a projectile three pounds in weight, and capable of piercing a considerable thickness of iron or steel plating. But besides



TORPEDO-BOAT.

way. The ward-room differs from the gun-room in its staid and sober quiet, except when some young officers, but recently promoted from the latter mess, show a liveliness popularly considered by their

these guns, which may be considered as the auxiliary armament of a torpedo-boat, are the tubes and carriages for discharging torpedoes. Fixed in the bows, and opening out through the stem,



AN ARMORED CRUISER.

or cutwater, is a tube which fires only directly ahead of the boat. On deck are other tubes which can be pointed, or, as it is called, "trained," in any direction desirable. The torpedo is discharged from its tube or carriage by means of gunpowder or compressed air, which is called the impulse. This expels the torpedo with considerable force, and during its progress to the water a small obstruction throws back a lever on the top of the torpedo, and so admits compressed air, from the chamber in which it is stored, into the engines. Thus the screw-propellers are set in motion automatically as the torpedo is entering the water; and while they continue to revolve the torpedo is kept moving through the water toward the object at which the tube or carriage was aimed. The torpedo can be adjusted, before being fired, to go through the water at any particular depth required.

The torpedo itself is double-ended in shape, like a cigar. At the forward point is a detonating contrivance called a "pistol," which explodes the charge when the torpedo comes into contact with an object. To insure detonation of the pistol, even if the object is not struck at right angles, there are "whiskers" or projections, and these cause detonation if the torpedo strikes the object obliquely. Next to the pistol comes the charge of gun-cotton, the weight of which varies in different

torpedoes, but which may be taken as about one hundred pounds. The greater part of it is wet gun-cotton, which is ignited by the explosion of some dry gun-cotton, called a primer; and this primer is itself exploded by the action of the fulminate contained in the pistol. The torpedo also contains a chamber of air to give it buoyancy, and another chamber of compressed air for working the engines. The engines are contained in another compartment, from which the shafts to turn the screws pass to the stem of the torpedo. There are two screws which work in opposite directions on the same center. This is accomplished by putting the shaft of one inside the shaft of the other. There are rudders for keeping the torpedo on its course and at its proper depth, and these are worked by a balance mechanism in the interior of the torpedo. Small projecting fins on the body of the torpedo reduce its tendency to roll. Precautions are also taken to render the torpedo harmless until it has gone a certain distance, and again after it has run its journey. In the absence of such precautions it might be more dangerous to friends than to foes, either by turning round and running back against the ship from which it was fired, owing to some defect in the steering arrangements, or by exploding when picked up by friends.

Half on deck and half below the upper deck of the boat, are bullet-proof towers, from which the

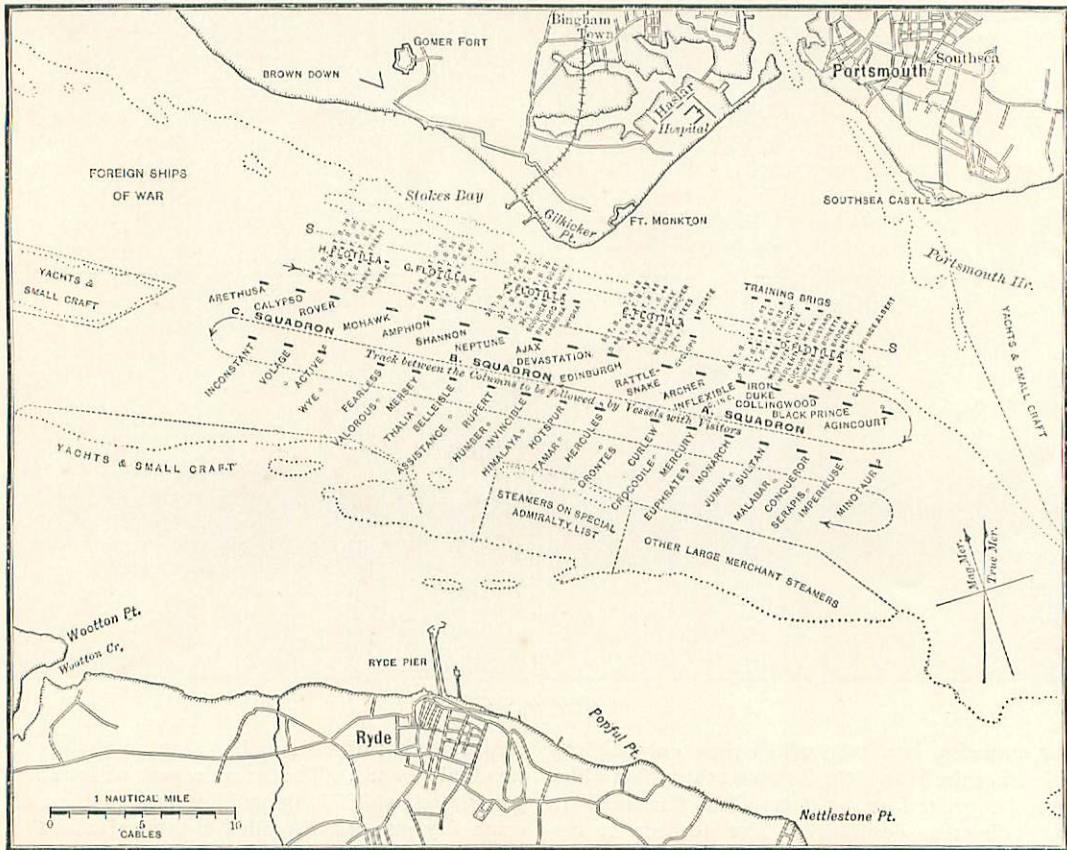


CHART SHOWING THE POSITION OF THE FLEET, FOR THE NAVAL REVIEW, JULY 23, 1887.

officer and steersman maneuver the boat in action. Inside these towers the steering wheels and the contrivances for discharging the torpedoes are placed. There are narrow slits around the towers through which the people inside can see what is going on outside, but which will exclude rifle-bullets.

So much of the bow-compartment of the boat as is not taken up by the bow torpedo-tubes is occupied by the men. Then come the engines and boilers, and the officers' cabin, which will accommodate two comfortably, as things go, or more at a pinch. Though No. 81 boat is designed to accommodate four officers besides the commander, every available inch of space is used for stowing arms, provisions, cooking utensils, and the many things necessary for service. In fact, were you to see the whole of the stores and furniture which a torpedo-boat carries, placed on the wharf beside her, you would think it impossible to stow them all away in so tiny a craft. But our visit to the torpedo-boat is at an end, and in our own craft, which is waiting for us, we make for the harbor again.

So fine had the weather been for weeks preceding the review, that as the day of the pageant approached, all felt that it must change. When the barometer fell, and the wind chopped round to a rainy quarter on the evening of the 22d of July, a regular downpour was foretold for the next day.

Early in the morning I ascended to the top of the high signal tower in the dock-yard, and gazed around. A thin mist hung over the ships at Spithead, but this was rapidly lifting before a light breeze, and the waters of the Solent, with the magnificent fleet reposing quietly at anchor, were soon revealed. The sky was clear and blue, and every outline of the surrounding scenery, comprising hills, buildings, ships, and sea, was sharp and well defined. Close under my tower lay the harbor with the old line of battle-ships, and the "Osborne," the yacht of the Prince of Wales.

All was quiet and still, except the pacing of a sentinel here and there, until the bell struck the hour of eight o'clock. Then were heard a few sharp words of command, a shrill piping, and there

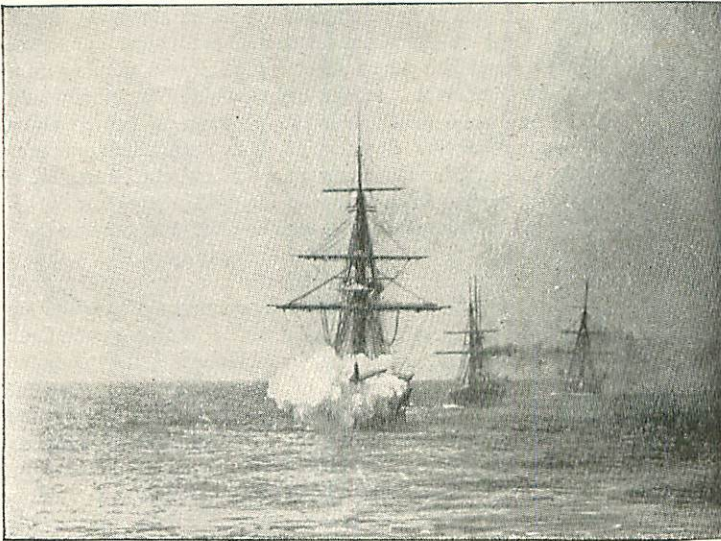
fluttered aloft a brilliant display of bunting, which, in the twinkling of an eye, had formed itself into a rainbow over every ship in view. This change was magical, for one could not see the men running away along the decks with the ropes which hoisted the flags into position. From the main-truck of the Osborne, the standards of the Prince of Wales and the King of Greece flew side by side. The forenoon was not very advanced when people began to throng the walks along the sea-front, the beach, the piers, and every possible point, above and below, from which a view of the expected pageant could be obtained. Long before the time appointed for the troop-ships conveying visitors to move out of harbor, thousands were thronging into the dock-yard, by special trains from London, in carriages, and on foot. The jetties were soon covered with people, and lined by ships two and

vessels already named, there were ten vessels for diplomatists, naval and military functionaries, scientific societies, and friends of those in the navy.

Punctually at the time appointed for the vessels to start on their tour round the fleet, they began to move, and at last a long stream of ships was seen threading its way between the lines of the men-of-war anchored in review order at Spithead. Many of them were to repeat the tour in the Royal procession, so they dropped their anchors near Osborne Bay, ready to take position in the line which was to be formed to follow the Queen's yacht, the "Victoria and Albert." The others, having seen all there was to be seen, took places to the southward of the south line of ships, in the positions which you will see marked in the chart. Soon after three o'clock a gun was heard. This was the signal which announced that the Royal yacht was leaving Osborne

Bay. Immediately the sound was repeated by another gun fired from the *Inflexible* (which carried the flag of the Commander-in-Chief), and then the cannonade of a royal salute thundered from every ship of the mighty fleet, till the air reverberated again. Meanwhile the royal procession approached, and when the smoke cleared away, every eye was strained to catch the first glimpse of the sovereign.

The way is led by the yacht of the Trinity Corporation, which precedes the royal yacht as a pilot, then comes the "Victoria and Albert," followed by the Osborne and the tenders and other ships of the procession. As the vessels steam grandly up between

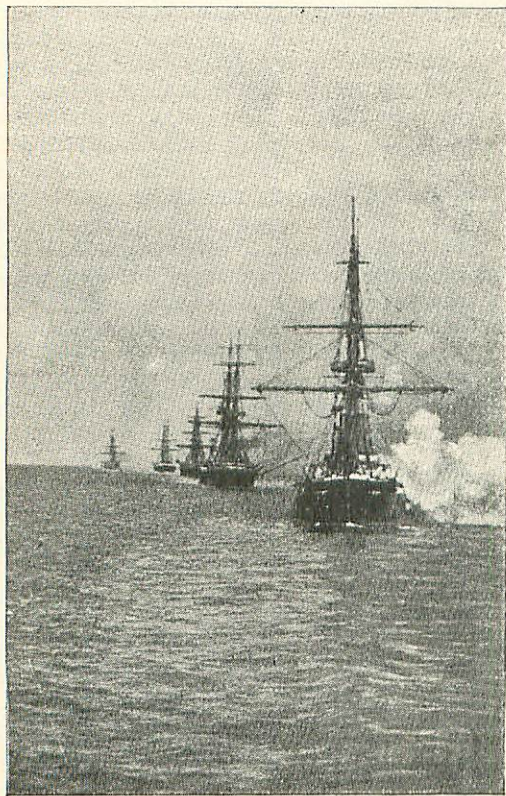


THE CHANNEL SQUADRON, NO. 1.

three deep, which received their cargoes of visitors as fast as they could possibly crowd aboard. The five gigantic Indian troop-ships, with their vast white sides glistening under a bright sun, looked superb. They were all alike, except that each had a stripe of color to distinguish her from her sister ships. The "Euphrates," with the blue stripe, conveyed the Cabinet Ministers and the members of the House of Lords, while the "Crocodile," which had a yellow streak, was assigned to carry the members of the House of Commons. The "Malabar" was allotted to Indian officials, while nine other troop-ships carried general visitors who had been lucky enough to secure tickets in the tremendous rush to obtain these coveted bits of cardboard which had been going on for some weeks. Besides the

the lines, the cheers of the blue-jackets, who are manning the yards aloft, or are ranged around the decks and the turrets of the mastless ships, are taken up by thousands of throats on shore, and passed along from point to point till the applause bids fair to out-thunder the salute still ringing hoarsely in our ears. Having steamed through the space between the squadrons of large ships and the flotillas of coast-defense vessels and small craft, the royal procession extends its tour to the eastward, and it is generally supposed that the sovereign is taking a cup of tea! But after some little delay, the yachts are seen to turn and again approach the fleet. As they enter between the lines of the squadrons of big ships the cheering recommences. Soon the vessels slow down, and, in obedience to a

signal from the Queen, they stop. Then another signal commands the attendance on board the "Victoria and Albert" of all the captains of the ships of the fleet. With them come also the cap-



CHANNEL SQUADRON, NO. 2.

tains of the foreign men-of-war, and a levee is held, at which the Queen addresses a few words to several of the officers. This done, the captains return to their ships, the procession proceeds on its course, and a signal is made to the Commander-in-Chief: "Her Majesty has great satisfaction and pride in the magnificent display made this afternoon by the Navy." Then, when the Queen has left the lines, the salute is repeated and the Review is over.

After the Review numerous small tenders conveyed the visitors from the big ships into the harbor, as the tide was too low to allow the troop-ships to go in.

Soon after eight o'clock the small vessels began to steam out of the harbor and to take up their positions for the last but, perhaps, most attractive part of the day's programme.

When it was dark enough, a signal-gun was fired, and immediately the form of every vessel in the fleet was revealed by a rainbow of lights from

the bowsprit, over the mastheads, and down to the stern. Another row of lamps was placed along the upper deck; the turrets of all the mastless vessels were outlined by colored lamps, which made them look like so many fairy castles, instead of what they really were, massive towers of strength armed with ponderous guns, capable of hurling ruin and death into the ranks of the enemy. Between the masts of the ships there appeared in large letters of electric light the Royal initials, "V. R." Rows of colored fireworks, alternating with bouquets of high-soaring rockets, illuminated the scene. Change after change of color and device awoke the admiration of the thousands afloat and ashore, till at length there flashed from every ship a searching beam from an electric light. These beams lighted up the shores of Gosport and Southsea on one side, and the Isle of Wight on the other. They displayed the buildings, and the crowds of people massed together along the beach and on the house-tops, and for a time converted night into day. After some minutes of play from these electric search-lights, which in warfare would be used to discover the presence of hostile ships probably a tiny torpedo-boat stealthily approaching under the cover of darkness, the beams were directed high into the air, and being turned inward, they met in the clouds between the two lines of ships, and so formed a series of beautiful, pointed arches of light. Words can not express the grandeur of the scene at this moment. Imagine for yourselves two long lines of massive ironclads stretching away till, by perspective, they seem to meet. The forms of their hulls, the graceful tracery of their tapered spars, are outlined in dots of various-colored lights. The waters on which these vessels proudly ride are gently rippled by the cool night-wind, till every dancing wave reflects a thousand tiny rays borrowed from the fairy lamps around, making the whole surface of the sea look like a floor paved with deep-blue turquoise, and densely strewn with diamonds.

Above, the lofty pointed arch of soft white light conceals from view the dark clouds, and dims the stars, which seem to vie with the myriad electric lamps defining the forest of masts and yards on either hand. We can not believe that we are afloat on a real sea and surrounded by the implements of all that is cruelest and most horrible on earth—War. But the steam-whistles, which have been used during the evening to order the changes in the illuminations, now suddenly scream out their final signal.

As if a curtain had dropped before our eyes, all becomes suddenly black, the darkness seeming darker by the suddenness of the change. But as our vision becomes accustomed to the dimmer

light, the stars shine out, as if in triumph at having outlasted their transitory rivals.

And now we realize our sudden return to earth. The rattle of the chain as the anchor of our little craft comes up, then the splash of the paddles as they slowly revolve, tell us that we are once more bound for the harbor. We pick our way cautiously

through a shoal of other vessels, great and small, all racing for home now that the great show is over. The monster pageant has required months of time and many thousands of hands in its preparation, but its triumphant success is the best reward to those who have labored so long and so faithfully to achieve it.

