THE

NAUTICAL MAGAZINE.

NEW SERIES.

JANUARY, 1871.

EDITORIAL ADDRESS.

THE good old ship the "Nautical" has now for close upon forty years made her monthly voyages, freighted, it may truly be said, with cargoes which have been of great value to the maritime community of our Country.

Guided by the veteran knowledge and wise judgment of the well-known officer who bade his many good friends an editorial farewell in the last number of the magazine (and who now retires from active command to spend, it is hoped, in peace the remainder of an honourable and useful life), the good old ship has made prosperous voyages and has gained a good name among nautical men. She has ever been kept clear of the troubled waters of politics, and the rocks and shoals of party or personal feelings of all kinds, and with the fair wind of public favour has kept steadily on her course, her voyages having been always made with the worthy motives of the advancement of navigation, the welfare of mariners of every grade, and the safety of all who travel across the seas.

But it will be well to speak more plainly on the subject of the Magazine.

The Editor feels called upon to put before subscribers and maritime men generally some sort of programme as to what may be expected of this New Series.

It is intended to make certain changes in the magazine which are in a measure necessitated to bring it more into

harmony with the spirit of this advancing age; and these changes will, it is confidently hoped, have the effect of maintaining the high character of the work, of enlarging its usefulness, and rendering it still more valuable as an instrument for the diffusion of nautical information in all its branches.

The Editor is much gratified at being enabled to announce that he has the promise of assistance from numerous men of mark in the nautical profession.

Hydrography will continue to be an important feature in the work; the information will be obtained direct from head-quarters and will be so arranged as to be of the greatest use to the mariner, and may be trusted to as a reliable and lasting record of information essential to navigators.

The scientific element of navigation will be brought prominently forward in the pages of the magazine.

A new feature will be the introduction of articles, etc., intended to minister to the moments of leisure or relaxation of the sailor. All work and no play is said to make even "Jack" a dull boy, so now and then will be published papers of an interesting or amusing kind, not necessarily on nautical topics; or a tough old yarn will be introduced in the form of a serial story. In fact a strong endeavour will be made to render the magazine useful and entertaining, adapted alike to the requirements of the state-room or cabin and the lower deck or forecastle.

The size of the magazine will not be limited, but will be adapted to the amount of interesting or useful matter which may be at the Editor's command each month.

Nautical men are invited to co-operate with the Editor, and to send to him any particulars which may be useful to the seafaring community. All letters containing enquiries on nautical subjects will receive careful consideration, and will be promptly replied to in the pages of the magazine.

With these changes it is hoped that the magazine will continue to be animated by the spirit which has hitherto made it the sailors' friend, and that its original high purposes may never be subordinated to unworthy ends.

The friendly support and co-operation of the nautical community will maintain the *prestige* of the Nautical Magazine

and achieve for it still further success; and the Editor will esteem himself peculiarly favoured if he can so propitiate all classes of maritime men that, under his direction, the Magazine may grow in popular favour and usefulness, and may thus in some slight degree be a means of adding to the honour and prosperity of England, and to the welfare of humanity at large.

WANTED, TWENTY THOUSAND POUNDS!

Who amongst us does not want this sum for his or her special benefit? And do not our hospitals, churches, schools, missionary societies, the fund for the sick and wounded on the Continent, and a host of other organizations that profess to minister to some of the ills that flesh is heir to, all stand in need of some such an amount as we have referred to? Of course they do. But the identical sum we have named is declared to be still wanting to complete what is required to provide sufficiently for every widow and orphan, left so by that national calamity, the loss of H.M.S. *Captain*.

We can fancy Mr. Holdfast, of the City—and there are a great many of that name, not only in the city but elsewhere—on being applied to for a contribution to help to meet this want, rather indignantly replying, "I don't see why I should be called on for this, the officers and men are paid for the risk they run, and they ought to make provision in proportion. I cannot be supposed to insure their lives. Heaven knows we pay enough for the navy, ten millions a year, sir! is no joke! I really must be excused." And friend Holdfast bows the applicant out of his office as though he had been insulted, buttons up his pocket as if the whole ten millions had come out of it, and turns to peruse a contract he has just concluded for supplying the navy with holy-stones, out of which he hopes to clear something near the identical sum wanted.

In the main we agree with Mr. Holdfast's arguments—he ought *not* to be called on—the officers and men *should* make provision in proportion to the risk—ten millions a year *is indeed* no joke, and it *is* the business of Government to see that right and justice should be done in this matter.

We have given our mite to the "*Captain* Fund," and would it were equal to the need, but at the same time, we are convinced

that the state of things which necessitated the gift is wrong, and are of opinion that provision should be made to remedy it.

But in order that the state of things as existing may be thoroughly understood, we propose to direct attention to the following points: first, the pay of officers of the Royal Navy; secondly, what they have to do with it; thirdly, why they, as a class, do not make adequate provision for their families in their lifetime; and lastly, what provision Government makes for the widow and orphan.

First, with regard to the officers' pay. The old adage, that "although a man may be bred to the sea, it does not follow that the sea should be bread to him," is more true than is generally imagined, and as we do not wish to tire our readers with an array of figures of the full-pay of each class, or the half-pay, not only of each class, but sections in all the letters of the alphabet from A to Z (which would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer), we shall take but one class as a type of the whole, which will be quite sufficient for our present purpose. We propose, therefore, to follow the career of a naval officer from a cadet to above the average height reached, as an example. We will assume that the lad's "father was born before him," and able to pay handsomely for all the cramming now required to make a boy—we might say "little man"—of thirteen, sufficiently up to the mark to compete with other little men for his first entry. If successful, he at once mounts his uniform and becomes an officer of the Royal Navy. Paterfamilias, however, is not relieved of his burden; £40 to £70 a year is still needed to maintain the young officer as a gentleman, in addition to the usual "fits out" of clothing, travelling expenses, etc., and he is scarcely worthy of attention as a "bread winner" until he becomes a sub-lieutenant. It is then just possible, after a good replenishment of his wardrobe to meet his exalted rank, that he may, if he be steady and not given to going on shore or billiards, manage to exist on his pay. Unfortunately, such virtues are not very general in young men of from nineteen to twenty-three. So it is difficult to imagine that the generality do not again trouble their fathers.

As a sub-lieutenant, his pay is £91 a year, out of which he has occasionally to replenish his kit, for the buttons of his coat tails, in spite of his efforts to the contrary, will gradually creep up his back, and Miss Nancy with her brawny black arm will beat his shirt to an ornamental fringe after three times wearing, for which beating he has to pay twice as much as you, Mr. Holdfast, pay for yours without the ornamental work; then he has to pay his mess, his servant, his hammock man, etc., so that at the end of the month,

when the poor fellow sits down to see what surplus he has for a cruize on shore, he finds it is such as will keep him extremely straight, and effectually prevent any great excess of youthful depravity.

But hurrah! "here's a letter on H.M.S. from the Admiralty with

> "A seal as large and as flat
> As the large cockade on his large cocked hat,"

and our "sub" is a full blown lieutenant with £182 a year, with the right to mess in the Wardroom; but (oh those buts!) the big letter contains his promotion "for rank only," there is no appointment to a ship; and this means, if on the home station, his packing up his traps, betaking himself to the nearest railway station, and from thence to his paternal roof and half-pay of £73 a year, nearly £20 less than he had when serving as a sub-lieutenant. If abroad, that sum for the year is greatly reduced by his having the privilege of paying two-thirds of his passage home, and if from China it would be a nice calculation to arrive at the amount left for him to exist upon during this usual year of probation, and to fit him out as a lieutenant. But once on board a ship again, he is in the full possession of a cabin, a position and £182 a year: again his mess, his washing, *necessary* wine bills, etc., at the end of his month leave him but a small surplus; still we will allow it does leave him with a surplus, and with great economy he can therefore live as a gentleman.

Alas! that officers in the navy are but human and not gods, although by the way, if we rightly remember our Classical Dictionary, the gods themselves had their loves and their failings; absence from female society, sometimes for long periods, causes them to be very susceptible, and as they know little about house rent, butchers' bills, and monthly nurses, in their simplicity they are easily caught, and when caught, good Mr. Holdfast, we are proud to say they are too honourable to haul off, and an officer's plighted word, that when he becomes a commander he will marry, is pretty generally kept.

Our lieutenant's engagement makes him think, makes him steady, and perhaps somewhat stingy. It is something to see him on shore! And then he only goes for a walk, returning "as steady as a pump bolt" in the dinner boat; wine does not agree with him after dinner; in fact, he is saving up his monthly surpluses: his £182 a year goes on no more and no less all the time he is a lieutenant, excepting he happens to be senior lieutenant, or obtains the command of a gunboat, in which case his pay is magnificently supplemented by

the addition of from one shilling and sixpence, to three shillings and ninepence per day. Happy man then, for if he could live under £182 a year before, at least part of the command money is a clear gain, and will ensure him happiness with his dear Rosaline—when he gets his promotion.

There are certainly little drawbacks, such as, intervals of half-pay, on four to eight shillings a day, which rather entrench on the savings. Accidents too, will occur even on board ship, clothes get spoilt with salt water, and the gilt is literally taken off the gingerbread by smoke, soot, and steam; climate will occasionally knock a man over, and invaliding is expensive work—but away with all these mean thoughts, here comes his promotion, the admiral has made a signal for him, has congratulated him on his promotion (after ten or eleven years' service as a lieutenant, and eight or nine before that) to the rank of commander, and invited him to dinner. He returns to his ship beaming with happiness, to receive the congratulations of his messmates, and in the exuberance of his joy and prospects, stands a whole half dozen of champagne to wet his commission. The midshipmen, who suddenly come to the conclusion that he was not half a bad fellow after all, pull him to the shore, while the ship's company give him three cheers, the band playing "For he is a jolly good fellow," and our newly fledged Captain (by courtesy) has to find his way home to Rosaline and happiness, as best he can, the liver certainly a little out of order and he not quite so young at thirty-four as he felt at nineteen.

Well, Rosaline and happiness, and eight and sixpence a day, are attained; the house is certainly very small, but large enough for all their simple wants, and is there not the picture of his late ship of which he was first lieutenant over the mantel-piece? not a rope yarn out of order, just as she looked when inspected by the admiral, who by the way, complimented the captain for the work of the lieutenant.

But soon he thinks it time to see about an appointment, and many is the talk on the subject, with tearful eyes on one side, until the application is made, and the answer received that his "letter had been received and laid before their lordships who would take his case into due consideration." It is the answer he expected, so he is not disappointed. After a few months and when he has been blessed with a son and heir, he thinks he had better go to town to push his own claims, and although he can ill afford the journey, still he must go, and he smuggles himself into the corner of a third class carriage, as if he were on his way to commit a burglary rather than to seek employment in a profession that professes to employ him. To make a long story short, he sees the

First Sea Lord, (who has just seen six or eight before him, all with the same tale—want of employment) he is well received, his services acknowledged, character well known as a good officer and seaman, but what can he (the Sea Lord) do? he cannot give employment to all, "but depend upon it I will not forget you when there is a vacancy," and he is bowed out of the room. After two years on half-pay our type is congratulated by his brother officers as a lucky fellow in getting an appointment so soon! He receives it almost with a sigh, and Rosaline laughs and cries at the same time, she does not know which she ought to do most, but both know the meaning of the appointment, it is simply separation for three long years; and there is Rosy in the cradle, who has lately joined her brother, looking up and laughing, as if the heart pangs of her father and mother were the finest fun out; but it is of no use despairing about it, "we must make the best of it and consider ourselves fortunate." So now to consider the ways and means. The savings have vanished and he has mess entrance, uniform, and all the attendant expenses of joining a new ship before him; he must have recourse to debt or an agent, and with an abhorrence of the former he appeals to the latter, who obligingly advances him fifty to a hundred pounds, for which our young commander has to pay five per cent., and two and a half per cent. on his pay, ergo, about twelve per cent. if the larger sum is advanced, and about twenty per cent. if the lesser, and when it is all paid off, he has to pay the two and a half per cent. for—nothing. Well, the epaulettes are bought, his old lieutenant's coats are furbished up with an additional gold stripe, which makes the old ones look shabby, but they will do. All arrangements are made as to Rosaline's support, she promises to be "so careful!" She has been very busy while her husband is away fitting out his ship, making all manner of nic nacs for his cabin, that is, when not engaged at the sterner work of sheets, pillow cases, shirts, etc., and as his clothes are stowed away in his cabin many a tear drop from his dear wife's eyes is stowed along with them.

The time is come, the good bye said, the handkerchief waved, the wife stretched in an agony of tears on the lonely bed, while the happy! fortunate! commander is too busy to give a thought to his dear ones now left behind.

His pay is now £365, barring the income tax, which blessing of the British public follows him everywhere, and takes back part of what it gives. With this he has to support, his rank, his mess, his wife and two children, and repay the agent; all this he does with the most exemplary forbearance and self-

denial, and returns home with a light purse but a merry cheerful heart, for has he not to meet all that he holds dear in the world? Again, he reverts to his "love in a cottage," and £155 a year.

Owing to the flattering report of the admiral on the paying off of his last ship, together with a good word from his last captain, who has interest, he is appointed to commission a ship, and to the envy of many not so fortunate he mounts his uniform and hoists his pendant. His pay of £365 a year is now augmented by command money, £68 a year; but fitting out is expensive work, and pride and zeal are expensive, his pride in his ship would lead him into all manner of extravagances not allowed by the dock yard, he would like to gild the figure-head, and put a little of the same precious metal about the ornamental part of the stern, but the want of that same precious metal in another form in his pocket forbids it.

Rosaline is now *so* proud of her husband, she has a firm belief that there is not another officer in the navy equal to him, and she is a true wife to believe it. But wife and husband, children and father, must again part. Will they ever meet again? Aye, Mr. Holdfast, such questions as these will rise on such occasions, and although with bursting hearts we say, "the three years will soon pass" we know to the contrary, and we know not what may happen before that. But, heave round, boys, stamp and go, strike up, fiddler,—the anchor's apeak,—brace round the head yards, and again we are on "the sea, the sea, the open sea, so wide, so free, etc.," but it is of no use, the words stick in our throat like a lump, and nothing but duty and time, blessed time, will remove it.

The commander has now to keep his own table, has had to lay in his own stock of wine, port, sherry, and marsala, perhaps a case or two of claret and the same of champagne, for very high days; he must occasionally entertain two or three of his officers, or he would be considered a shabby fellow, and it would not do to be thought that, even though Rosy may have to go without a winter frock and Jack go about in shabby knickerbockers.

Six months from England and he hears of another addition to his family, he pulls rather a long face, as well he might, but when the letter assures him that both his wife and the little "Newcome" are doing well, and he reads a small piece of crumpled paper scrawled rather than written, with a pencil from herself, telling him, oh such sweet words! and that she was thinking of him all the time, he stealthily kisses the precious document. It would not do, oh no, for the captain to be seen guilty of such weakness, so he crushes the paper into his pocket, and seizing his cap, rushes on deck and looks

long and earnestly through his spy glass at—nothing—and hums

"In Providence I trust,
For what must be must"—

and then "giving his sighs to the wind" resumes his wonted dignity. Some months after he receives another letter in the well-known hand but somewhat shaky. His heart misgives him when he sees the black border, and below in his inner cabin where no eye can see him, he learns that his dear bright-eyed child Rosy had gone to the haven of rest, and that six weeks ago she was laid in her narrow home. Oh how sudden! quite well, and merry as the lark, by the last letter—dead and buried by this!—can it be possible? that little thing that twined herself so closely round his heart, that to separate them seemed like tearing away the old ivy from the older wall, the one would scarcely go without the other,—and I away! It must be a dream! but oh no! there lies the too true telltale letter —but

"Draw the curtain close
And let us all to meditation."

What are you doing aft there? Don't make a noise. The ship knows well there is something the matter, never was such a stillness, the men take off their shoes as they pass over the Captain's head—the very orders are given in a subdued tone and are silently obeyed —no sound of laughter rises from the wardroom—the very mirth of the gunroom is quenched, for has not the Captain we all respect received bad news?

Yes, Mr. Holdfast, that is another of the things he is paid for, but how much do you value it at? What is its market value in the City? they say everything can be ticketed there—what's the figure? don't blow your nose and wipe the dust out of your eyes, but speak up like a man if you have any voice left.

Orders for home! hurrah! The capstan flies round and the fiddle is "nowhere" in regard to time,

"Hoist, hoist, every sail to the wind,
The course of my vessel improve,
I've done with the toils of the sea,
And, sailors, I'm bound for my love."

Oh that provoking order "to proceed home under sail." No coals to be consumed without being hauled over the coals for doing so; those dreadful calms, the hopes, the fears, the amount of breath expended in whistling for wind, all these trifles are magnified; but at last the welcome order is given to "let go the anchor," and once more our hero is on shore.

We will get hurriedly through three years in the coastguard as

Inspecting Commander, which appointment he is fortunate in getting, and when he may be said to live in clover.

He at last is promoted to a Captain, and he retires from active duties to half-pay of £191 a year, or just sixpence a day more than he had become entitled to as a commander.

Jack has now to be sent to school, we will say he is sent to the Royal Naval School at New Cross as it is not only the cheapest, but the boy has a chance of winning a cadetship. Forty pounds a year, or we should say per nine months, with clothes, travelling, etc., comes very heavy, but as Rosaline says, "we must make some sacrifices for the dear boy," so wine becomes a myth in the household, the evening glass of gin and water becomes more watery, the small beer becomes smaller, and the occasional cigar is changed for a pipe, the other children's clothes are turned again on the principle that one good turn deserves another, and Rosaline's cheeks are not quite so plump as they were, but all are cheerful and hopeful, for Jack is a steady boy, holds his own at the school, and is going in steadily for a cadetship.

The captain cannot expect a ship yet, he is too young both in rank and age, having received his promotion at forty-three; but he hopes for one, and his friends are on the look-out. One year, two years pass and no appointment; the £300 saved, in spite of the most rigid economy, has shrunk to one-half that figure, and his agent's account sets him thinking, he thinks as he sleeps, and as he shaves, and cannot help thinking—as he prays. Yes, Mr. Holdfast, you need not open your eyes so wide! we repeat it—as he prays; sailors may be devil-may-care fellows, they brave all kinds of danger, but in their heart of hearts they mostly have a God enshrined to whom they pray.

A telegram! "From Jack, to Captain ——, Dear Papa, Have won second cadetship—shall be home to-morrow." Oh what joy! how Rosaline kisses her husband and the children, she is so happy! so is the captain, but he cannot help thinking how much better it would have been if Jack *could* have won the first, which carries with it the Yarborough Scholarship, equal to about £40, it would have helped *so* much to fit him out. Jack however comes home and is received with all the honours of a hero. We will assume that he is successful in passing the ordeal at the College at Portsmouth, and that he is safely shipped on board the *Britannia*, where we will leave him to work his way as his father had done before him. The father returns home to count up the cost, and finds that the cost of travelling to Portsmouth, and to Dartmouth, with numerous