

THE
CHURCHMAN

AUGUST, 1881.

ART. I.—MISSIONS TO MERCHANT SEAMEN.¹

WHEN the arch-heresiarch of Alexandria sought to spread his pestilential doctrines throughout the then known world, we are told that he taught them in song to sailors, that they might, with the corn of Egypt, carry to distant nations the leaven of his heresy. It has often been so since, that the enemy of Christ has had no more effective agency than that of seamen for the dissemination of unbelief and sin, for the thwarting of mission labours, and for the spread of the physical fruits of wickedness, throughout both the civilized and the uncivilized world.

Happily, the converse is equally true. Since our blessed Lord chose the majority of His Apostles from the ranks of fishermen, He has had no more effective lay-missionaries for the spread of the Gospel throughout the world than the holy men who have, from time to time, adorned the profession of the sea. One of the latest of our missionary bishoprics, that of New Westminster, may be traced to the urgent appeals of a pious naval officer still living, who, owing to his long service in the Pacific, became the chief promoter of the first missionary effort to Frazer River. Another bishopric, that of Falkland Islands,

¹ "Bible Classes in the Navy." Prize Essay of the Royal Naval Scripture Readers' Society, 4, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.

"Lay Work in the Royal Navy." Prize Essay of the Naval Church Society, Fortsea.

"Lay Work in the Merchant Navy." Prize Essay of the Missions to Seamen Society, 11, Buckingham Street, Strand, London, W.C.

"Church Work amongst Sailors." By Convocation. Published by Wells Gardner, Darton, & Co., Paternoster Buildings, E.C.

The Annual Reports, Missions to Seamen Society, 11, Buckingham Street, Strand, London, W.C.

owes its inception to the devoted life and labours of the late Captain Allan Gardiner of the same service, who perished in his efforts to win the Patagonians for Christ. A third bishopric, that of the Niger, similarly sprang from the efforts of a deceased naval officer, the good Admiral Trotter. And many other missionary enterprises throughout the world are indebted to seamen of all ranks, both of the royal and of the merchant navies, for personal labours, holy examples, and devout encouragement, conferred upon them during the brief visits of British ships.

With these two opposite pictures before the mind, it is surely incumbent on the Christian Church to enquire into the means by which seamen may be made more effective instruments in promoting Godliness throughout the world, and may less frequently become the disseminators of vice and irreligion. They are strong, peculiarly strong, for either purpose. As a calling, the men of the sea are whole-hearted for good or for evil. They are very impressionable; but this excellent quality is too often accompanied with lack of fixity of purpose. The earnest minister can with comparative ease excite in them conviction of sin; the difficulty is for them to be rooted and grounded in the faith. This difficulty is much enhanced by the frequent absence of the outward means of grace; and if they are to be continuously built up in the faith, this spiritual provision of devout worship must receive more earnest attention. How can the life of God in the soul be properly sustained, if, when on shore at strange ports, churches be practically shut against the sailor stranger; and if when at sea, especially in the merchant service, the Lord's Day be not observed, united worship be unknown, and privacy for individual prayer, or for studying the Word, be impossible? Is it any wonder if, in the absence of such like outer helps, the results of Christian effort in the seaports too often lack permanency? It must be remembered that these men in general have been brought up in their boyhood in our schools; and further instructed in religion by our Church. But in consequence of their after-life, there was almost certain to be the lapse, loss, and decay of that which they had imbibed in their childhood. And it is the chief object of the missions to repair this melancholy waste.

The sailor's home is his ship. There, in the foreign-going vessels, he spends nine months in every year. Of the 38,616 registered vessels sailing under the red ensign, not one bears a chaplain. As the owners and the captains provide food, water, and housing for their crews, so are they bound to make spiritual provision for the voyage. No one else can do so. There can be no assembling of themselves together for Divine worship, but by the officers; and the whole moral and religious tone before the mast is usually determined by those abaft the mast. In the

Queen's service three-fourths of the fleet have not chaplains; but every ship carries a library, and all officers in command of Her Majesty's ships-of-war are enjoined to "cause the public worship of Almighty God, according to the Liturgy of the Church of England established by law, to be solemnly, orderly, and reverently performed in their respective ships, . . . and that the Lord's Day be observed according to law." Moreover, the Admiralty require, chaplain or no chaplain, that "every week-day, after morning quarters or divisions, at the discretion of the captain, short prayers from the Liturgy of the Church of England are to be read publicly to such of the crew as can be spared to attend." This daily public prayer sanctifies daily life on board Her Majesty's ships, leads to volunteer religious gatherings of various kinds, and prevents the too keen social persecution of those who would kneel in personal prayer night and morning, or who would study the Word of God for themselves. Hence, in nearly every ship-of-war there are evening Bible classes, bands of total abstainers, and men who, notwithstanding the unavoidable presence of many shipmates, kneel in individual prayer daily. Christ is, in short, honoured by the service of many hearts, whose lives are a power for good, not only at sea, but in whatsoever ports they enter. These are the leaven which leaven the whole crew, and make British men-of-war's men a credit to the country and to the Church.

Very much the same happy spiritual condition obtains in Swedish and Norwegian merchant ships. There, most of the captains conduct Divine worship every Sunday, and in many of their vessels every day, according to the Liturgy of the Scandinavian Church. Consequently, their crews are noted wherever they go, even by boastful Englishmen, for sobriety, industry, physical health, professional skill, and godly living. Their physique, their nautical ability, and their good conduct are, indeed, held up in contrast with that of some English merchant sailors, much too frequently and too truly to gratify our insular pride. Even in British harbours they purchase with their own money more Bibles and, strange to say, more English Books of Common Prayer, albeit translated into the Scandinavian language, than do British seamen. It is with very mixed feelings that we learn that the Missions to Seamen Chaplain at Cork last year twenty-five Bibles on board Scandinavian ships for every one sold to English-speaking seamen; and twenty-eight Books of Common Prayer to Norwegians for every one sold afloat in the English tongue.

But English merchants do not all neglect their duty to God and to their employéés. All English shipmasters do not forget that they also have a Master in heaven. The crews, whose happiness it is to serve under such holy auspices, differ morally,

physically and spiritually from those of the prayerless ships. Men are very much what circumstances make them. Many British merchant-crews are quite the equals of men-of-war's-men, and of Scandinavians, in every spiritual grace. They have followed their officers to the foot of the Cross. Alas! that the crosses of St. Andrew and of St. George should fly over so many merchant vessels in which there is no public recognition of Almighty God at all, no knee bowed before the Lord and Maker of all, and no Bible reading whatever. For the godless character thus imparted to their crews, the employers are primarily responsible; for whatever fault may lie at the door of the captains, it is the employers who select, appoint and retain these prayerless officers in command.

A great cause of ungodliness in the British mercantile marine is the growing disregard of the Lord's Day. Especially is this the case in foreign harbours, and by British steamers. The chaplains abroad, thoughtful captains, and godly seamen, complain bitterly of the growing practice of taking in and discharging cargoes on Sundays, when in Roman Catholic, Mahomedan and heathen ports. All worship, week-day or Sunday, is thus stopped. This greed of commercial competition by certain shipping companies leads half-hearted merchants into the same godless practices, and ruins the souls of helpless crews. The Sunday thus profaned for filthy lucre's sake in port, effectually prevents the Lord's Day being devoutly observed in those ships when at sea, and stops week-day prayers, the consciences of the captains rebelling against the inconsistency. These are the employers and captains who speak ill of seamen, and who do nothing to promote their welfare. How can it be wondered at if seamen so trained up under a godless system return the compliment with some un-Christian interest? The lack of sympathy and fellow feeling between employers and employed in prayerless British merchant ships is a most painful result.

Happily for the Christian name of our Bible-loving country, there are other British merchants, and their captains, who, without any instigation of the Church on shore, honour God in their business. From the dawn of the Reformation, public worship "with the ordinaire service usuall in the Church of England" was the rule in British ships. And it is so still, that in the vast majority of cases where united worship obtains at all, the Book of Common Prayer supplies a common bond uniting Foreigner and Englishman, Churchman and Nonconformist, all, except certain unbrotherly brethren, with absent friends on shore and afloat, before the footstool of the one common God and Father of all. The responses and Psalms afford the crew the wished-for opportunity of taking an audible share in the worship; whilst the numerous Scripture portions make amends for the absence of

a sermon. The Presbyterian captain is, so to speak, a Churchman when at sea; and so is the Wesleyan and the Congregationalist. Even when education was less general at sea, the captains and crews were able to overcome the supposed difficulties in finding "the places" in the book. To remedy these imaginary difficulties several substitutes have been compiled. They generally consist of the Book of Common Prayer with all the Scripture portions cut out; all reference to the Christian seasons excised; and all the prayers for special occasions, even most of those "for use at sea," omitted. The eight or ten portions of God's Word included in the usual morning prayer of the Church of England are cut down in these abbreviated nautical service-books to one, or at most two, Bible portions. Moreover, when the sick seaman lying in his bunk in mid-ocean, would find in the Book of Common Prayer solemn thoughts and prayers suitable to his wants, these abbreviated substitutes ignore his special needs. And should death itself visit the ship, as death, alas! does, the curtailed forms of prayer make no provision for the burial. Men-of-war's-men would not use such books. And, left to themselves, intelligent merchant seamen naturally like to feel themselves on an equality with men-of-war's-men, and with landsmen, in having the same public worship as shore-going people. And as to the extempore system of public worship, every captain is not equal to rightly dividing the manifold needs of a congregation in prayer, whilst merchant seamen serve so short a time under the same captain, that they have not always such confidence in him as to commit their souls unreservedly to that officer's keeping. Seamen like to look into their own Prayer Books, and to see with their own eyes that the captain is speaking what is in the book, and that he is not making believe, by inventing something out of his own head.¹

'Tis something, that we kneel and pray,
With loved ones, near and far away;
One Lord, one faith, one hope, one care,
One form of words, one common prayer.

Two years ago, the Convocation of Canterbury recommended that "when sea-officers have shewn themselves steadfast in conducting services on board ship for a few voyages, it seems desirable that they should receive episcopal recognition in the diocese to which their ships belong, and by being commissioned as lay readers. Meanwhile, we are glad to learn that efforts are being made by the Missions to Seamen Society to band them together as members of a Lay Helper's Association." The

¹ See "Our National Seamen and our National Church." W. Wells Gardner, Darton & Co. Price 6d.

Bishop of London has acted upon this recommendation, by signifying his willingness to commission as lay readers, in respect of labours afloat, experienced and earnest volunteer workers for God on board ship and in foreign ports. This is a happy step towards that recognition of their highly responsible and important religious duties, not only to the whole, but also to the sick and dying, which captains feel they have a claim to receive at the hands of the Church on shore. It is by the agency of such godly officers that the kingdom of Christ can be most effectually extended over the seas. And the efforts of the Church on shore should be directed towards strengthening the hands, instructing the minds, and sustaining the spiritual life of such workers at sea. In the absence of such God-fearing captains and shipping companies, the crews of the vast majority of British merchant ships are perishing for lack of spiritual awakening, guidance and instruction. In most ships, no man cares for their souls; sinners hear not the sound of the Gospel; and though professing a Christian name, have no saving knowledge of Him whom to know and to love is life eternal. It is only when in port that such neglected crews can be reached; and we must now turn to inquire what is being done in our seaports to win them for God in Christ.

It was not till the conclusion of the great war at the beginning of this century, that the need of spiritual provision for the shipping at the principal seaports attracted attention. In 1812, the Prayer Book and Homily Society was formed, which for many years did an important mission work amongst emigrants, troops, and seamen visited on board ship, in addition to its ordinary purpose. It aimed especially at instituting services at sea, and promoting habits of prayer on board ship. With this object it circulated addresses to masters, to mates, to the crew, and to the passengers, on the duty and benefit of public worship; whilst it prepared and circulated on board ships, "Prayers taken chiefly from the Liturgy, arranged in fourteen portions, for family worship, with forms of prayer to be used in storms at sea." This effort to provide for the daily worship of God on board ship, where seamen spend the greater part of their lives, was certainly beginning at the right end. The efforts afloat of this now defunct Society seem, however, to have been confined to the Port of London; and to have been rather an accessory than the main object.

The provision of facilities for united worship when in port, was only second in importance to that of promoting habits of prayer on board ship. In those days, merchant sailors were attached to their ships for much longer periods than at present. They also more frequently resided on board their vessels when in port, assisting to work the cargoes and to refit the rigging.

It was natural, therefore, that the first churches for sailors should be constructed on board disused ships moored in their midst. The first of these floating churches was the old sloop of war, *Speedy*, of 400 tons. This vessel was fitted out by the Dissenters, moored in the Thames, and opened for Divine service on the 4th of May, 1818. It was not till seven years later that the London Episcopal Floating Church Society was formed, of which the Reverend Horatio Montague, previously a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, was the first chaplain. In the following year, on Good Friday, 1826, the old sloop-of-war, *Brazen*, of 590 tons, was inaugurated as its floating church, off the Thames Tunnel. The funds and staff appear to have been, from the first, wholly inadequate. After the Society had struggled to subsist for eleven years, its annual income had, in 1836, reached only £293, against £1,940 expended by its Nonconformist fellow-labourer. In due time, however, other ports followed the lead of London, till the coast of England was dotted with Church hulks, most of which had very few mission workers, and little funds for effective plant. The experience of most of the hulks was similar to that of the *Brazen*, of which it was reported in 1836, "the attendance of sailors had not been so good as was expected." The idea of a mission—*i.e.*, of personal dealing with individual souls in the course of visitation of ships, and of bringing them bodily to church—had not yet taken root; the staff and the appliances were wholly insufficient for aggressive action; the hulks were popular enough for Sunday worship amongst landsfolk, but to the minds of sailors there attached to hulks ideas of prisons, quarantine, and coal depots, and not of places to attract respectable seamen. The three that still remain are, it is true, doing effective service under able and numerous staffs; but the success attained is in spite of, rather than because of, the churches being on board hulks.

Moreover, in due time, the customs of commerce changed, docks were opened, and seamen began to reside by twenties and forties in boarding-houses on shore. Under these altered conditions, it was evidently desirable that the Church should follow the crews, and also take up its quarters on *terra firma*. "Mariners' Churches" now sprang up in the larger ports; but, when built, difficulties in providing the necessary stipends of the incumbents led to their being diverted from their ostensible purpose. It appears that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners could not endow the Mariners' Incumbencies, unless each clergyman took charge of a district containing some 5,000 or more very poor, and often dissolute, residents. The mariners' churches thus became, in fact, the parish churches of poor and populous districts, the seats were appropriated to residents, each single-handed incumbent had far more than he could accomplish for his stationary

parishioners; and the sailors, whether on board ships or in boarding-houses, were as wholly uncared for as before the Peace of 1815. Not only so, but the existence of an appropriated district church, assuming to itself the title of the "Mariners' Church," became a hindrance to proper worshipping facilities being provided for deep-water sailors.

The one exception to this painful diversion of funds and churches from the use of sailors, is St. Paul's Church for Seamen, Dock Street, London, E., which, in 1847, succeeded the London Episcopal Floating Church Society's hulk, the old *Brazen*. The incumbent of St. Paul's, Dock Street, now a parish church with 8,500 resident parishioners, is also chaplain of the Sailors' Home adjoining, and of the Destitute Sailors' Asylum, and loyally adheres to the intention of the founders, that sailors should have the first place in his ministrations. The ground-floor of the church is wholly free and unappropriated, and the attendance of officers and seamen at its services during last year was nearly 14,300, making a total attendance of 350,000 sea-going men at the Sunday services since the opening of the building in 1847. The incumbent is assisted by a curate, as well as by two Missions to Seamen Scripture readers, &c., by whose assistance 4,634 visits were made last year to seamen on board ships, 4,578 to those in barges, 4,356 to those in boarding-houses and shipping offices, and 5,740 to seamen elsewhere, making 19,248 visits in all, besides 1,721 visits to Spanish, Portuguese, French, Italian, and Scandinavian ships and boarding-houses. We enumerate these visits specially, because it is in this personal dealing with individual men in their homes—and the ship and the boarding-house is the sea-going man's real home—that we must seek for the effective cause of St. Paul's parish church having so many sailors worshipping there, whilst the other waterside parish churches, on either side of the Thames below London Bridge, have so few. Satisfactory though these results are, as compared with the attendance of sailors at other waterside parish churches, doubts may well arise whether succeeding incumbents of St. Paul's, with such a heavy parish to care for, will continue to give sailors the first place in their ministrations.

It was not till the year 1835 that the Church can be said to have taken kindly to the water. An ardent young clergyman in that year gave himself to the work of God afloat. A flash of morning sunlight on a window on one of the Holme Islets in the Bristol Channel met his eye as he strolled along the Somersetshire shore. Not before aware that there were any houses on yonder isolated spot, he determined to pay the inhabitants a visit; and finding them entirely cut off from the ordinary means of grace, he instituted himself their chaplain during the remainder

of his holiday.¹ From thence he was led to cross the Bristol Channel to Penarth Roadstead, on the Welsh coast, where some 400 windbound vessels were lying at anchor some miles from shore. Here he began his self-imposed ministrations, day by day, from ship to ship, and from roadstead to roadstead, at all seasons, and in all weathers, which during eighteen years brought to otherwise perishing souls in those outer waters, pardon, peace and salvation. On week-days, as well as on Sundays, at a distance from the land, its excitements and its temptations, attentive congregations were found to join devoutly in worshipping God, and in listening gratefully to the message of salvation. The moral and religious condition of the merchant service was at that time deplorable. Such unlooked-for and unwonted clerical visits to the forecastles and cabins of ships were as though an angel from heaven had suddenly come down on the decks. The surprise and astonishment over, none were more grateful for sympathy and teaching than these crews, who had heretofore been so wholly neglected. "Truly," the chaplain wrote in 1850, "I pass from roadstead to roadstead here, as a dying man preaching to dying men. Every heavy gale that sweeps the sea buries in its abyss some of the Bibles I have sold, the books and tracts I have given, and, in the prime and vigour of life, the men whose hands received them from mine." As he brought the Mission vessel to her moorings after his last cruise, he was able to report that "he had boarded upwards of 14,000 vessels at sea, or in open roadsteads, and had sold to British seamen upwards of 5,000 Bibles and Prayer-Books."

Meanwhile, in 1844, the attention of some of the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House having been attracted to the devoted labours of this clergyman in the Bristol Channel, somewhat similar clerical agency afloat was originated in the more restricted waters of the Thames. A sailing church, called the *Swan*, was provided, to move from pool to pool, and from reach to reach, and from tier to tier of the shipping, carrying a clergyman to conduct services to successive congregations. The crowded waters and the strong tides of the river were not found quite favourable to a movable church, and the *Swan* in due time disappeared, to give place to bases of operation on shore, from whence row-boats are launched on the river. A noble work on this latter plan continues still to be done by the Thames Church Mission.

Unqualified blessings had attended the services held on board the ships sheltering from the gales, or otherwise windbound in the Bristol Channel. When the first pioneer clergyman retired

¹ See *Sunday at Home*, No. 1169, September 23, 1876, article: "The Word on the Waters."

from this arduous and hazardous enterprise, the Bristol committee felt bound to continue and to extend the Church's ministrations afloat. The difficulties which naturally attend such provincial efforts led, in 1856, to the formation, in London, of the Missions to Seamen Society, now of 11, Buckingham Street, Strand, London, W.C., which aims at doing the work of the Church of England on the waters around our shores and in foreign harbours. With an income last year of only £16,628, it employed two steam yachts and ten sailing vessels in carrying the ministrations of religion from ship to ship, daily, throughout the year, amongst the fleets seeking temporary refuge in the twelve principal outer anchorages of England and Ireland. Unchallenged and alone, this Society occupies these hazardous and stormy outposts of the Church. The only spiritual care from the Church of England which reaches ships sheltering in such outer anchorages reaches them through the agency of the Missions to Seamen.

The speciality of this Society is, that it began with, and still continues to make spiritual provision for, the shipping anchored at a distance from the land. It was soon, however, found necessary, at the invitation of the parochial clergy, and with the license of the bishops, to occupy the docks and rivers, and even to disembark from the waters altogether, so as to follow the sailor into the boarding-houses, public houses, and other haunts away from his proper home. These temporary abodes lay principally in very poor and very populous sea-board parishes, the incumbents of which were greatly overweighed with the charge of their too-often dissolute resident parishioners, and were, therefore, quite unable to give any heed to the ever-changing nautical lodgers within their bounds. The principal care of the Missions to Seamen is not, it will be seen, the sailor when at home with his family and his friends, but the sailor when a stranger in a strange place. Indeed, the families and relatives of respectable deep-water sailors seldom reside near the docks. It is not a desirable locality in which to leave a wife and family in the sailor's absence at sea. For this reason the society is not primarily a waterside mission. If it reclaims any waterside residents, nautical or not, it is incidentally, whilst following the stranger of the sea into his temporary haunt on shore.

Including its work amongst men-of-war's-men, fishermen, bargemen, and emigrants, the Missions to Seamen employs, as a paid agency, two clerical superintendents, twenty-four chaplains, thirty-nine Scripture readers, and six lay helpers; of whom, however, five chaplains and two readers do not give their whole time and services to the Society. This is a very small staff to work as many as forty-six seaports. Experience shows that a

local expenditure of at least £400 to £500 a year is necessary to work a large station effectively; whereas, the Missions to Seamen only expend an average of £305, including office expenses, on each of its forty-six stations. The staff of each port should certainly include at least one mission clergyman giving his full time and services to seamen, assisted by Scripture readers in proportion to the amount of the shipping and barges. Moreover, it is only beginning to be fully realized that the waterside parish churches are not sufficiently available for mission uses, and that the plant for working the shipping, barges, and boarding-houses must include a well-appointed Mission Church freely open to sailors, with a large reading-room or institute attached, built on the spot where sailors ordinarily congregate. Without some such well-situated place of worship likely to attract seamen, under the control of the mission chaplain, in which sailors can be personally welcomed, and where cheerful services at suitable hours can be daily conducted, the plant is incomplete. The cost of such a double edifice ought not to be less than £4,000 or £5,000.

Waterside parish churches often have some free seats; but it is not customary to point them out, unasked, even to fairly-dressed persons, much less to do so to roughly-dressed strangers from the sea. Therefore, in some ports, mean-looking Bethels or rooms near the waterside are to be found, in which services other than those of the Church of England are conducted by uneducated laymen isolated from ministerial guidance. But neither does the appearance of these rooms, nor the peculiar services, prove attractive to the more educated sailors. Captains, officers, engineers, petty officers, and other seamen of the better class, who might be expected to lead their younger shipmates to accustomed services in well-appointed churches served by godly clergymen, are not generally disposed to attend such mission-room worship; nor do they always relish being preached to exclusively by uneducated persons, who, in some cases, have served at sea in positions inferior to their own. It was accordingly of these ports where no special seamen's churches exist, that Convocation reported of the waterside parishes, "few of the sailors attend church, and next to none communicate."

Though Bristol was early in the front in providing clerical ministrations for the shipping in the outer roads, it was only last year that it had a church for sailors on shore. True, it had a so-called Mariners' Church built in the wrong place, and diverted from its ostensible purpose, in which mariners were, therefore, conspicuous by their absence. Sailors, strangers to the port, were seldom seen in the waterside churches, but worshipped, if at all, mainly in the Cathedral, or in the Bethel. In both places the free and open system afforded them as strangers

a welcome reception, and in both there was plenty of singing. But for the careless majority whom it is desired to bring anew under the Gospel message, there was no special church. A Bristol merchant, who had long given liberally of his time, his thoughts and his labours to God in the service of seamen, gave them, last year, a well-appointed, handsome little church, surmounting a fine institute. There are at Bristol, as elsewhere, shipping offices, to which every seaman entering or leaving the port must come to receive his wages on paying off, and to seek a ship when outward bound. For this latter purpose, seamen may have to wait outside the shipping offices many days before they meet captains seeking crews. At this place, where sailors necessarily congregate, a waiting room was specially needed. Here, then, was the good Bristol merchant's opportunity. On this spot he built a lofty and capacious waiting room or institute, with its freely open door facing that of the shipping offices: and above it a handsome church. The waiting-room is used by sailors every day; and when, at 10.30 A.M. the Church bell stops, at the personal invitation of the Scripture readers, one and all go upstairs to the beautiful Church, where a cheerful mission service, occupying twenty minutes, is daily conducted by the chaplain. The men join audibly and fervently in the responses and singing, kneel devoutly in the prayers, and carry away with them a short Gospel message as a sea-stock of holy thoughts for days to come. Many who thus heartily worship, being Non-conformists, or foreigners, or otherwise unacquainted with the Book of Common Prayer, paged books are provided, and the chaplain gives out the page at each change of place; thus teaching them, amongst other good things, how to use the Prayer Book. The week-day attendance varies from thirty to fifty men in the prime of life, men changing every week, so that there were as many as 10,730 attendances of deep-water seamen at these week-day church services at Bristol last year, besides some 5,000 attendances of sailors on Sundays.

To provide congregations for the Sunday services, it is essential that there should be indefatigable visitation, especially on Saturdays and Sundays, of the boarding-houses, public houses, and worse places, by a faithful band of Scripture readers and lay helpers. Many a sailor has been snatched by these faithful readers from the paths of the destroyer, by physical force, to which the men good-temperedly submit. As assistants to the chaplain, these excellent lay readers are most essential aids in bringing sailors to the House of God. For it must be remembered that the message of the Mission to Seamen in these dock churches, is to the less moral and less respectable class, as well as to others of the ever-changing strangers who temporarily lodge in the boarding-houses and on board the ships. Wherever,

as at Swansea, Cardiff, the Tyne, and elsewhere, handsome little churches, properly situated, have been placed at the command of Missions to Seamen chaplains, assisted by active bands of Scripture readers, the Church services have been well attended by non-resident sailors. But these churches are too few in number. Such churches, with institutes attached, are greatly needed by the Missions to Seamen in Poplar, South Shields, Newport (Mon.), Hull, Sunderland, and Hartlepool.

We have dealt, so far, mainly with the most desirable *plant*. We do not forget that God's Word, however sown, shall not return unto Him void. Nevertheless, we plead that what is sown should be His Word, His whole Word, "the whole counsel of God." And we do so the more that a careful inquiry into the evident results achieved at various ports by different means, leads us to the conclusion that tangible success is in proportion as the whole Scriptural system, in all its fulness and variety, of our Bible-loving Church, is most faithfully presented to seamen in teaching and in worship. We speak of tangible results advisedly, for we doubt not that God, who alone knows the human heart, sees many conversions to the truth as it is in Jesus which are unknown to man. We cannot, however, measure the unknown; but we venture to look for such tangible and obvious expressions of true religion as habits of individual prayer, public worship, and Holy Communion. Oral teaching and the dissemination of religious literature are means which ought, amongst other effects, to bring about the above tangible results. If these fail to produce such personal evidences of grace received, then we venture to question whether the literature used and the teaching are of the most useful kind.

There is often an entire absence of positive teaching about the Lord's Supper. Mere silence on the subject will not defend devout seamen from erroneous views concerning it. It should be remembered that pious sailors entering strange ports, knowing nothing of special Church teaching, are more likely to be guided in their choice of a place of worship by the welcome accorded by the vergers than by doctrinal distinctions. Or, take the danger on board ship. Men at sea trying to make out what is right from their Bibles, without the help of the Book of Common Prayer, or of the authorized standards of faith of other evangelical churches, or of ministers of religion, are apt to be led astray. Though some teachers may be silent as to the Lord's Supper, seamen themselves are not so indifferent. They value the ordinance highly. A man-of-war's man writes, in a pamphlet recently published by the Naval Church Society:—¹

¹ See "Church Organization in the Royal Navy." Published by Griffin & Co., Portsea.

It would surprise many, no doubt, to hear that on the Lord's Day, in harbour, a few in simple faith would get leave to land and go aside into the mountain, taking their Bibles, and obtaining a loaf and wine, remember their Lord and Master in His death, in obedience to His own gracious command "Do this in remembrance of Me." On our passage home from China we broke bread in the boatswain's storeroom, &c.

Nor is the merchant seaman less anxious to participate in the Lord's Supper. The American Seamen's Friend Society publishes a pamphlet by a merchant Captain, entitled "Religion off Soundings," in which, under the heading of the Lord's Supper, the Captain describes how he himself administered it :—

A tumbler of wine and a plate of bread were placed upon the cabin table, around which we all took our seats, and bared our heads while God's blessing upon our worship was implored. In a familiar way, I then made some extended remarks about the ordinance, referring to all the passages in the Bible relating to the subject, all of which were read aloud. The bread and wine passed, each handing them to the other, after which the second mate made a brief prayer. Several such seasons have been observed since, on other voyages.

We have heard of several merchant ships in which this practice occurs. Yet, when we turn to those ports where the Missions to Seamen has not a church, Convocation reports of the waterside churches that "Few sailors attend church, and next to none communicate."

The well-taught sailor, when far distant from our shores, finds in the evangelical principles of our Scriptural Book of Common Prayer, an efficient substitute for the living voice of the preacher. Many seamen follow the calendar in their private reading; taking the Second Lessons throughout the year for their daily Bible portion; and, on Sundays, having more leisure, they strive to read up those Second Lessons which time may have failed them to read during the week, whilst, if time admits, they devote a portion of the Lord's Day to studying the First Lessons of the previous week. In this way they are helped to keep up a systematic Bible reading; and when, in the lonely bunk on some distant ocean, the sick—or, it may be, dying—sailor, longs for instruction and prayer, he naturally turns to the Office for the Visitation of the Sick for holy thoughts and devout supplications. Often do serious sailors far from land meditate in private spiritual communion with God on the Prayer Book Service of the Holy Communion; whilst, when assailed by plausible doctrines of a doubtful tendency, the Creeds and the Catechism have often proved a safeguard to many. Even the more careless sailors are sometimes glad to have a Prayer Book at hand; as merchant captains, who never prayed with their crews before,

have been known in perilous times at sea, to assemble their crews to join in the Form of Prayer to be Used at Sea; and when a death occurs on board even the least prayerful ship, the crew expect the body of their late shipmate to be consigned to the deep with the solemn Office for the Burial of the Dead. Even the Presbyterian Church of Scotland has found it necessary to provide a liturgy for sailors. It is a very good one, so far as it goes; but it goes a very short way to provide for all the vicissitudes of life at sea, whilst it does not remind the sailors of any holy services joined in with friends at home. The Convocation of Canterbury is bringing out a "Manual of Prayers, Scripture Readings and Hymns for the use of Seamen at Sea," which they are careful, however, to say only attempts to provide forms of united prayer for use in the mornings and evenings of weekdays, purposely varied to prevent monotony. None are provided by them for use on Sundays; "because the Book of Common Prayer should then be adopted, which cannot be surpassed in excellence."

We may well thank God for all the attempts that are being made to make spiritual provision for sailors, by whatever agency, and we may well thank Him for the blessings vouchsafed on such limited and imperfect efforts. Our purpose in this article is, by comparing plan with plan, to endeavour to point out to zealous friends of sailors the established principles which have been found in practice most effective in winning souls for Christ, in building such souls up in the faith, and in helping them, by God's grace, to be steadfast and immovable. These are days of great mental activity in religious matters, and this activity reaches now to the sea as well as to the land. If merchant sailors, brought under conviction of sin, and then sent off to the ends of the earth without the guidance of living teachers, are not to be "like children carried away by every blast of vain doctrine," they must be provided with opportunities of public worship, as well as of private prayer, and be armed with the safeguard of very definite and very clear doctrinal teaching, on lines akin to those of our Evangelical and Scriptural Church.

Though much is being done to supply the spiritual needs of merchant shipping, barges, and river craft, this is as nothing in comparison with what is left undone. The shipping in many seaports at home and abroad are destitute of religious ministrations. Thousands of British ships are never visited by a clergyman. Tens of thousands of British seamen never hear the sound of the Gospel on board their vessels. No spiritual provision is made for the enormous fleets which constitute the British mercantile marine, except that which springs from purely voluntary sources. Only to societies such as the Missions to Seamen can

our merchant sailors look for such sacred ordinances as by inheritance are necessarily provided for their brethren on shore. This is what renders the existence of a Society for Missions to Seamen desirable for the conversion and continual sustenance of souls at sea. With such a claim on the support of a Christian people and of a great maritime nation, we cordially commend the object of Missions to Seamen to the thoughtful consideration of all thoughtful people.

W. A. BAILLIE HAMILTON
(Admiral).

ART. II.—THE TEXT OF THE REVISED NEW
TESTAMENT.

1. *The New Testament in the Original Greek.* The Text revised by BROOKE FOSS WESTCOTT, D.D., and FENTON JOHN ANTHONY HORT, D.D. Text. Cambridge and London: Macmillan & Co. 1881.
2. *The New Testament in the Original Greek.* Edited by F. H. A. SCRIVENER, D.C.L., LL.D. Cambridge: At the University Press. 1881.
3. *The Greek Testament.* Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 1881.

THE object of this Paper is to indicate: first, the character and importance of the work undertaken and accomplished by the Revisers, in reference to the Greek Text of the New Testament; and, secondly, the principles and method of their procedure. Textual criticism is too often regarded as a matter lying altogether beyond the province of ordinary students and readers of the Bible, and even of those who are able to read it in the original languages. Now the mere fact of the existence of the Revised Version, based on a reconstructed text, should do much to dissipate this kind of mistake. As soon as it had been determined that the "Authorized Version" should be revised, the question of the text to be adopted became one of indispensable necessity. The discovery of ancient manuscripts, and of other important documents, which were not accessible to the scholars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, rendered it impossible to adhere to their text. And, in truth, the object of the Revision being to determine, with reverence and devotion, and as closely as possible, what is really the Word of God in Holy Scripture, the determination of the Greek text was as indispensable an act of reverent devotion as the determination of its true meaning in English. In short, one most important test of the value of the