

**AN OLD
SAILOR'S YARN**

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An old sailor's yarn by H. Clarkson Birch

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H. CLARKSON BIRCH

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"AN
OLD SAILOR'S
YARN."

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PREFACE

This book is an attempt to describe a state of things that is past or fast passing away. The only merit claimed for it is the merit of truth.

H. CLARKSON BIRCH.

DEDICATION.

To my brother Frank this book is affectionately dedicated.

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CHAPTER I.

Manchester Grammar School—Dockland—Killick & Martin—Naval Architecture—Sailors' Homes—The John C. Munro—Disillusionment—Sad Sailors—the Real Sea—Officers' Manners—A Cockney's Philosophy—Ingenious Reckoning.

It was a proud moment to me when one Sunday evening in the summer of 1874, my Father, having already excited my curiosity and flattered my vanity by proposing that I should stay away from Church to keep him company, asked me how I should like to go to sea.

Visions of being a midshipman and walking the quarter deck, of wearing a uniform and a dirk, flitted across my mind, for I had read all Marryat's Novels and the stories of R. M. Ballantyne, and being but fourteen years old, the glamour of a seafaring life appealed to my imagination. Alas, I was soon to be disillusioned.

When my Mother and the family returned, my Father gravely announced that my future career had been decided upon.

As he was in a very good position and enjoyed a comfortable income, what his reason was for taking me from school and