

NAVAL NAVIGATORS.

THEY HAVE MANY VERY SERIOUS DUTIES TO PERFORM.

Besides a Thorough Nautical Training the Officer Who Navigates a Man-of-war Must Be Possessed of a Vast Fund of Technical Scientific Knowledge.

It is doubtful if any office in the navy, aside from an absolute command, involves so vast a responsibility as that of navigator of a man-of-war. The duties of this important station in former years fell to officers of the rank of master, but with the abolition of that grade its affairs devolved upon the lieutenants holding the highest numbers on the list. Upon the navigator of a warship depends not only the task of shaping the vessel's course for any point across the seas to which her duties may direct her, but also the responsibility of piloting her in and out of harbor and of selecting a safe anchorage for her in every port visited during the period of her cruise. Hence, it follows that, combined with a thorough nautical training, the competent navigator must be possessed of a vast fund of geographical, meteorological and hydrographical knowledge. While at sea, he must know the vessel's position to a degree, which necessitates his taking frequent observations of the celestial bodies and making solutions of intricate problems in geometry and trigonometry, such as constantly arise through deviations, brought about by innumerable causes, from her given course. Unquestionably the most important element in navigation, because of its infallibility under ordinary conditions, in determining the latitude, longitude and error in the ship's compass, is what is known in maritime phraseology as "nautical astronomy." With the aid of a sextant or quadrant for measuring the altitude of the heavenly bodies above the horizon or their distance from each other, a timepiece to mark the instant of an observation, a chronometer to show the time at the first meridian, a nautical almanac and an azimuth compass, the navigator can readily determine his position with the utmost exactitude.

The average voyage is more or less characterized by erroneous estimates in distances sailed, in varying currents, careless steering, deviation in the compass and numerous other obstacles, and upon the navigator rests the responsibility of adjusting such errors. In long passages across the open sea the navigator is governed by a rather complex combination of motives, which may be summed up as follows: To cover the required distance in the shortest space of time with the smallest expenditure of fuel and the least wear and tear of the vessel that is possible.

With these objects in view the navigator must prior to sailing superintend personally the stowing of the hold, the arrangement of ballast, water, provisions, stores, etc., and the inspection and adjustment of the motive appliances of the ship, all of which features, severally and collectively, greatly affect her speed and seaworthiness.

If his vessel possesses the facilities for making sail, he must while at sea exercise the keenest judgment and foresight as to utilizing the same, for sail used to good advantage is a great saver of coal, while otherwise, if used indiscriminately, it may entail much loss of time. The expert navigator draws the line with exceeding fineness between a high fair wind and a gale, making the most of the former as long as his vessel is not jeopardized, heaving her to at just the proper period and getting under way again at the first sign of moderation in the weather. The commander of a warship reposes the utmost confidence in a skilled and careful navigator and rarely interferes with his plans. Another of the numerous details coming under the navigator's supervision is the keeping of the ship's log. This is commenced by him at the time the vessel is placed in commission, and its pages record the events of each succeeding day. There is absolutely nothing which transpires officially on board of a man-of-war that is not written in the log, and each day the navigator must carry it to the commanding officer for his inspection. At the expiration of every six months the ship's log must be closed and forwarded to the navy department at Washington, where it is placed among the records.

The navigator is provided with a large and varied assortment of instruments and appliances designed to facilitate his work. While in port he is often detailed to make surveys of portions of the coast line which may be defective upon the charts or to determine the exact location of rocks or shoals which hitherto have not been marked with sufficient accuracy.

The navigator has charge of all the various weather indicators of the vessel and must render quarterly reports of all meteorological observations. These are taken at regular intervals by the quartermaster of the watch and fully entered upon the ship's log. The navigator must regularly inspect the steering gear, compasses, anchors and chain cables of the ship and daily report their condition to the commanding officer. He must also keep a separate book in which are recorded all calculations relating to the navigation of the vessel and in which no cruises are permitted to be made. At the expiration of the cruise this book is forwarded to the bureau of navigation.

The duties of a navigating officer are more than sufficient to fully occupy his time, but, notwithstanding this fact, he frequently stands his watch at sea. While in port he is ex officio the executive officer during the latter's absence from the vessel.

The illustrious Dewey was, during the earlier period of his career, an acknowledged expert as a navigator, and to his excellent ability in maneuvering may be largely accredited his splendid victory at Manila.—Philadelphia Times.

When Hungry in China.
There was a painful lack of variety in our food. Men dying of thirst spend their last hour in thinking of food champagne, sherry gobblers, cocktails and draughts of beer, whiskies and sodas, dead horses' heads or whatever their particular beverage may be. We gastronomically fooled ourselves to the top of our bent. "I think," one would say, "when we get to the Hotel de Paris tonight we'll have a nice little French dinner of six courses, with coffee and green chartreuse to wind up with."
"Well," another would remark, "I should be content with some soup, a little fish, a slice of beef and some tart."
"Chops and tomato sauce for me," murmured a third, oblivious of the fact that befell Mr. Pickwick, who had a similar desire.

Then we would reach a slimy, begrimed village, creep into a smelling hut and make our dinner of pork and rice, or rice and pork when we desired to vary the menu. But one night, at a spot called Taiping-pu, when we called for the perennial pork we were informed we could not be supplied. "No pork," we exclaimed, "no pork in China! Why, Chinamen are three parts pork." Then we were told we were in a Mussulman village, where swine were an abomination, but we could have salt beef. We jumped joyfully at the salt beef, so called, though we knew perfectly well it was nothing else but stale, unprofitable, sinewy wild goat.—Travel.

A Day to the Cause.
Mrs. De Gadd—I heard the awfullest things about Mr. De Good today. They say he steals the church funds.

Mr. De G.—Nonsense.
"Oh, I've no doubt it's true. Mrs. Veragood, that horrid young widow, you know, seems to be infatuated with him, and I shouldn't wonder a bit if they'd pawn the communion service for a bridal outfit. By the way, Mrs. Finesoul has not been out of the house for a week, and people think her husband has been beating her, but that isn't a circumstance to the way they talk about Mrs. Highmind. I saw her on the street today, and she said she felt sick, but most likely she'd been on an opium debauch. She has her husband's collars and cuffs washed at a Chinese laundry, and she's been seen to go there for them herself. Oh, she's a terror! Mrs. High-up's husband has been away for two weeks, and I've got my opinion about it too. People say Mrs. Tiptop's hired girl left two weeks ago, the very day Mr. —"

"See here! Where did you hear all this?"
"I've been out collecting money for the heathen."—New York Weekly.

The Decay of the Dandy.
Brummel went to prison for debt, but came out again to resume his fopperies. His friends made him a small allowance of £120 per annum—equal at Caen to £300—but he could not be expected to live on such a pittance. When he had not 4 francs in the world, he would order boot polish at 5 francs a bottle from Paris and call the tradesman who supplied it "a scoundrel" for venturing to ask for his money. In the end his intellect gave way. He lost his memory and much of his little mind. He grew slovenly and careless, yet to the last clung to his eau de cologne and some other luxuries. Finally, his mind all gone, he was removed to a charity hospital, being now reduced to the utmost impoverishment and content to change his linen once a month, instead of three times a day, as of old. Here he died, under the care of sisters of charity, on March 30, 1840. Thus ended the striking career of perhaps the most worthless fop whom history records, his death being a fitting termination to his useless life.—Lippincott's.

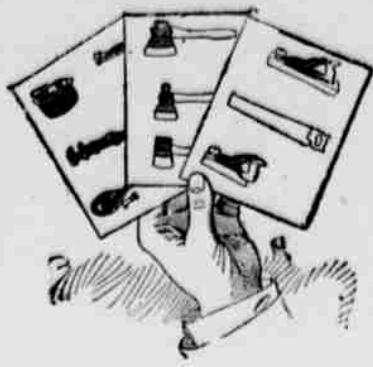
Melba's First Appearance.
Mrs. Melba recently gave an interesting account of her first public appearance. "I was quite a young girl in Australia," she said, "when, notwithstanding the persistent discouragement of my father, who was averse to the idea of a singer's career for me, I engaged a hall and sent round a notice to all my friends. Unfortunately somebody mentioned the little scheme to my father, and he, furious at my clandestine enterprise, begged every one of his acquaintances to uphold his parental authority by ignoring the performance. But I wasn't disheartened, and at the hour announced for the commencement of my concert stepped on to the platform—to find myself face to face with an audience of two. And nobody else came."

A Hard Pie.
That German was a delight, her cookery was often vile, but she was amusing. Her first efforts at pastry making were lamentable. "Margarete, what was the matter with the apple tart? The crust was like a stone." "Oh, madame, I voorked so hard. I said to myself, 'Now ze harlder I voork ze better it will be,' so I rolled and I rolled, and I used all my strengt, and now it is von stone."

One morning Margarete bounces into my room and bursts out in an injured voice, "Madame, does our coachman belong to my towel?" At last I discover that she refers to the round towel in the scullery, on which the offender had wiped his hands in passing.—Cornhill Magazine.

Angelic Acid.
Apropos of acids, there is an angelic acid, obtained from that most graceful of our umbelliferous plants, cultivated in England in the sixteenth century as a pot herb and still used as a caudied sweetmeat. From this "herb angelic," or "root of the Holy Ghost," whose fragrance was reputed good against poison and pestilence, was also distilled a perfume, charmingly named angel water, affected by the beauties of the seventeenth century. "I met," says Sedley, "the prettiest creature in New Springgarden. Angel water was the worst scent about her."—Cornhill Magazine.

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