

## SHIPS THAT CANNOT SINK.

The ship that cannot founder or go to pieces on the rocks has yet to be built; but England is making way in this direction. Lord Ravensworth, in his address to the Institute of Naval Architects, declared his belief that in the whole range of scientific industry there is nothing in which we have made greater progress than in the materials of which ships are built. He specially referred to the case of the *Apollo*. No ship, in his belief, has ever been known to sustain such injuries to her hull as she did and live to tell the tale. The length of the damage was about 100 feet, of which some 60 feet or more consisted of one great rent. She was shown to have struck on three different rocks, but such was the toughness and strength of the steel employed in her plates that in many cases they were bent upwards without breaking, and such was the elasticity of her frame, and particularly the connections between her two skins, that, notwithstanding the tremendous amount of injury, the inner skin was never penetrated. It is believed that not a single drop of water ever got into the ship. She was taken back safely into Queenstown.

## QUEER CAUSES OF FIRE.

Moistened tin turnings and chips have been known to take fire.

A rat gnawing at a box of grease dripped friction matches ignited the lot.

A running belt which sagged into a mass of greasy waste set fire to the heap by friction.

A flood burned one factory by causing a pile of iron filings to oxidize so rapidly as to become intensely heated.

A lens exposed to the sun's rays in an optician's window frequently acts as a burning glass before being noticed.

A match carelessly dropped beneath a lace curtain was stepped upon, ignited and instantly the drapery was ablaze.

A cockchafer crawled from an oil receptacle to a gas jet, where the creature's oily body took fire, and, falling, spread the flames.

A stream from the firemen's hose started a second fire while putting out the first, the water having penetrated an adjoining building containing quicklime.

A nail glanced from a carpenter's hammer into the conveyor of raw material in a jute factory, rubbed against the drum and produced a spark, which set fire to the place.

## EMBASSADORS INSTEAD OF MINISTERS.

Great Britain and France are to be represented at the seat of Government in the United States hereafter by Ambassadors instead of by Ministers Plenipotentiary as in the past. In the Fifty-second Congress a law was passed providing that whenever any nation should confer the rank of Ambassador on its representative at Washington, the President might make a like change in the grade of the United States corresponding official at that nation's capital. Great Britain, with characteristic intelligence and promptness

in embracing opportunities calculated to secure to it moral or material advantages, was the first to make the change, and its representative thus becomes the head of the Diplomatic Corps at Washington. France, the other country which has made the change, will be the second. The rest of the big Powers, it is probable, will soon follow the example of the two great nations of Western Europe. Mr. Cleveland has reciprocated by conferring the rank of Ambassador on the diplomatic representative at London whom he has just appointed, Thomas F. Bayard, and, of course, the same rank will be extended to James B. Eustis, who has been sent to Paris.

These ranks are recognized among diplomatic representatives, viz: Ambassadors, Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary, and Charges d'Affaires. Ambassadors compose the highest class, Envoys the second and Charges the third. U. S. representatives at foreign capitals up to the present time have been of the second class. Robert T. Lincoln, who is about to leave the British Court, is an Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, and so are the like U. S. officials at the courts of the other foreign nations. And, conversely, the diplomatic representatives of those nations at Washington have been of the same rank.

The differences in privileges and prerogatives attaching to the different classes of representatives are marked and significant. An Ambassador is the personal representative of one potentate at the court of another, while an Envoy only represents the nation. Ambassadors may, as a matter of right, demand an interview of the monarch, president or other head of the State to which they are accredited, but Envoys can ask such an audience merely as a favor. A Charge d'Affaires is supposed to deal only with the Foreign Minister, Secretary of State or other official of this rank.

The alteration in status which this change will bring to the United States is of considerable importance. In a diplomatic sense, that country will stand in the front rank among the nations at foreign capitals. Along to this time its representatives in London, Paris and the rest of the Old World States have stood socially below those of some of the second-class Powers. It is the diplomatic rank of the representative and not the population, wealth or general resources of the country to which he belongs which determines his standing in the nation to which he is accredited. As the president makes the necessary changes in the rank of U. S. representatives, they will, in foreign capitals, be on the same footing as those of Great Britain, France and the other leading Powers, instead of being on a level with those of the smaller nations. The change will, or at least, ought to, necessitate the selection of men of the highest order of ability and political experience as representatives at the courts of the great nations, and it may render desirable an increase in their salaries. To the former requirement, the president will doubtless conform, and, at the latter, the people will hardly grumble when they consider the added dignity which is conferred on the country which boasts of its democracy.

## HOW TO MAKE A MILLINER.

No wonder the French bonnets have an air and a style never to be attained this side of the water. Hear how they learn the pretty art of putting together a bit of lace, a flower, a ribbon, and fettering them with a wire or two. Three years is the apprenticeship of the French milliner. Influence, special talent, and money secure the aspirant tuition in a first-class house. The price demanded by the leading milliners for the secret of their skill is \$300. During the three years of apprenticeship, the apprentice is boarded by madame, and has an opportunity to become an artist. During her apprenticeship, however, she never earns a sou, and not until the third year is she permitted to design. The third year is devoted principally to visiting the wholesale houses, examining and pricing ribbons, feathers, and flowers. To every ball, reception, wedding, theatre, she must go, that no whim of dame fashion may escape her alert eye. The first night of every new play or opera finds the milliner's apprentice in a front box. The madame defrays the expenses of these outings, which to the uninterested seem a round of pleasure. It is as essential to the milliner's apprentice to be at every fashionable gathering as for the creators of literature, art, or music to be in the atmosphere of their aspirations. The third year is the severest, despite its interest, in the milliner's apprenticeship. In the height of the seasons they are on the wing from early morning often until the following daybreak. Daylight often finds them working out ideas caught at a midnight ball or soiree. Such a life demands a strong constitution, and many an apprentice never recovers fully from the strain of the third year. The trade mastered, the most skilled rarely commands a salary exceeding \$40 or \$50 a month. So jealously do most great houses guard their reputation for novelty that they change their designers frequently lest they fall into ruts or mannerisms. The saleswomen undergo almost the same discipline as the head designer or trimmer, and once in the trade they are known throughout the millinery houses of Paris by their Christian names, "Mademoiselle Marie," "Jean," or whatever it may be. It is the ambition of each to become in time mistress of an establishment, and lucky is she who wins the smiles of a star of the Odeon, Comedie Francaise, or the Grand Opera.

We have been reminded, by the proceedings of the Behring's Sea arbitration, of the story told of an Old Country divine who, upon numerous occasions, preached from the words "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended." One of his parishioners once remarked that he would like to know if those prayers of David ever would be ended. "No," said the divine, "they are ended so far as this world is concerned, but David is praying up on high and there's no knowing if he ever will stop." It seems much the same with U. S. Consul Carter's arguments. They have been several times announced in the telegrams, which came from American sources, as having been finished; but every morning when we read the papers we find that he is at it again, having been, as it were, wound up for an indefinite period.