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Sealing and Sealing Ships

By James Murphy

With the most modern facilities for sealing, and with the seal hunters better fed than their fathers were, today, March 25th, we find that the sealers have not enough of fat on hand to "appease their lusts." Have the seals left us. Are our sealers as capable as we seem they are in locating the seals. At this juncture the ice may have something to do in it. Of course the chances of the sealers, however, the thing remains to be seen that the sealery is violently on the decline, either through natural causes or otherwise. I purpose to give a few items on "The old Sealing days" which may interest the Mail's readers. I'll begin at the Spring of 1897.

This Spring on March 20th the little Walrus, 183 tons, and 35 men, owned by the firm of J. and W. Stewart, entered port with a full load of seals, taken E. N. E. off the Funks, on and after the 15th of March, the late Capt. Piere Mulloy, father-in-law of the Hon. Minister of Finance and Customs, Mr. P. Cashin Esq., M.P.A. This Spring the Wolf was cut in two in Green Bay by the heavy ice. The Commodore, Capt. Munden, owned by Mr. Munro of Hr. Grace, brought in 22,500 pounds in 1898, 1899 and 1900 of 1872.

The Monticello, from Boston, brought in over 3,000, not enough to pay for expenses. She received such rough usage by the ice that she could not go out on a second trip.

The Commodore was forced by the ice up into Bonavista Bay, where whitecoats lay in thousands around her, she even towed seals after her. A writer to the "Boston Traveller" stated that Mr. Munn, the owner of the Commodore is one of the best of our merchants and also are of the richest.

The great cause of the small catch of seals in 1872, was due to the pressure of great fields of ice, which filled all the harbors and bays so tightly that steamers and sailing vessels were alike, powerless. The gales of wind piled the ice in large "humps" twenty and thirty feet high.

The sealing vessels didn't get out of Harbor Grace, the Spring of 1882, until the first week in April. The Dundee ships had a hard time coming to St. John's. The Resolute, in command of the renowned Capt. Arthur Jackman, didn't arrive until March 14th. She sailed on the 16th, and was four days stuck in the ice near Cape Race before she got her freedom.

The steamer Hercules, used for breaking up the harbor ice, and also for a passenger steamer as well, was jammed in the ice in Conception Bay for nearly three months, very poor trips were made this Spring, Capt. Samuel Blamford led the St. John's

steamer, he was master of the Esquimaux. The Bear, Hector, and Merlin couldn't clear out from Catalina, the ice was surrounding all the Northern outports.

I remember that haunts of stone for the Church of England Cathedral took place at the time that the steamers were fitting out for the voyage. It was a grand sight to see the thousand men and to hear the music of the band and the voice of the different ships' crews, singing the old songs. The men of the Leopard, Nimrod, Pirieus, Esquimaux, Resolute, Narwhal, Hector, Neptune, Panther, Wolf and Bear and their captains and their owners were thanked by the late Rev. Mr. Bowwood of St. Mary's, Southside.

The Merlin lost her propeller, and had to come to port under canvas. The Tiger got tipped badly and came in "creeping along the shore." The Hector was damaged, the Aurora had her bows broken, the Esquimaux and her stern post injured, and the Resolute had her propeller broken. The Artic, Capt. Adams, had a narrow escape from being lost on March 26th, when 15 miles N.N.E. of the Funks. The wind changed to N.E. the ice rafted, the crew began blowing the ice up with powder, a violent storm came on. The Arctic heeled over on one side and then on the other. Capt. Adams put 100 bags of bread on the ice, and other grub also, in case of an emergency—but she turned up O.K. Her beams were broken, bunkers were broken and the deck pump was broken. Capt. Adams said his officers behaved nobly and that with their courage and the crew's as well, his fine ship, the Arctic, than the largest sealer and whaler in the world was saved.

It was the Spring of 1887 that the Eagle, Capt. Arthur Jackman was reported lost. The Eagle was in company with the other steamers in the mouth of Bonavista, on the evening of March 15th, and took ten or a dozen whitecoats on board. Captain Jackman waited till night-fall and in the darkness eluded the observations of the others, starting out to sea on a Southern and Easterly course, and at daylight headed North for White Bay. He calculated the position of the whitecoats, and on March 18th, he steamed into the body of them off the Horse Islands. He entered in port on Easter Sunday and great rejoicings took place over the arrival. The crew were well, and Capt. Jackman was hale and hearty—the most ridiculous lies were circulated about the Eagle, and I am sorry to say that the sealing har still exists, as we have him today in all his glory. There are a few yet with us who will remember the hundreds of citizens who thronged to the ship's side on that blessed Easter Sunday morning.

The State of Mexico

CONDITIONS in Mexico have been for the past two years but of bad enough in all conscience late they have been growing worse. The different factions are still opposing each other, each jealously watching and seeking to gain the advantage in every possible way. Anarchistic conditions continually threaten the peace of Mexico City, foreign residents are in constant danger of death at the hands of murderous Mexicans and despatches say that diplomatic representatives there have decided to leave in a body since there appears to be no Mexican government worthy of recognition. Gen. Villa who has set up a government at Chihuahua has invited the diplomatic corps to join him at his capital but to do so would be equivalent to recognizing his faction and the invitation will be ignored. The people of Mexico City are confronted with a shortage of food so acute that starvation appears imminent and Gen. Obregon, the Carranza commander, has refused to allow wealthy members of foreign colony to provide for the succor of the needy. Many foreigners in Mexico regard the conditions obtaining there as of so menacing a nature that they are talking of an expedition of the allied Powers similar to the one that was sent to the relief of the foreign legations at Peking at the time of the Boxer uprising.

Realizing the seriousness of the situation the American government recently despatched warships to Mexico and sent an ultimatum to the Gen. Carranza demanding that he provide protection for foreigners and warning him that unless he did this promptly the government would take the matter into its own hands. This note to the constitutionalist chief

considered the strongest and most emphatic correspondence that has gone out from Washington to Mexico since the vigorous representations to Huerta about a year ago.

In his reply Gen. Carranza declared that the constitutionalists are not responsible for the unpleasant situation existing in Mexico and insisted that he has always tried to safeguard the interests of Americans and other foreigners. He promised to do what he could for the protection of citizens of other countries temporarily living in Mexico but expressed the hope that to all foreigners will promptly leave that country until tranquility has been restored. To this end he pledged himself to provide every facility at his command for their exodus.

Numerous minor disorders have taken place in the Mexican capital. Mobs made up of people of all classes have been marching through the streets and participating in demonstrations intended to call the attention of the authorities to their need of food. Everywhere they go brandishing the worthless Chihuahua money and bad faith of self-appointed leaders. Not long ago a huge mob stormed the national palace in an effort to release some 250 Catholic priests held to the relief of the foreign legations which several persons were killed and injured.

When the Carranza forces took charge of the Mexican capital a "war assessment" of about a quarter of a million dollars were levied on the priests and on their failure to pay this amount the native priests among them were thrust into prison while those of foreign birth were deported on the ground that they had "sniped" men of Obregon's army and had even

attempted to kill Obregon himself when his force entered Mexico City. Recently Gen. Obregon and the Carranza forces evacuated the capital and Zapata troops took possession of it. It is reported that some of these soldiers shot and killed J. B. McManus, an American citizen, because, they alleged, he had killed three of their number some time before. The killing of McManus has caused much excitement in the foreign colony in Mexico City and the Washington government has demanded that the men guilty of the deed be punished and that adequate reparation be made.

The American government is represented in Mexico by Duval West, a former U. S. district attorney at San Antonio, who has been sent there as a special agent by President Wilson for the purpose of conferring with the various leaders and ascertaining as far as possible the actual conditions obtaining there and to learn how the situation may be most advantageously handled.

A report was current some time ago that a plan was on foot to incorporate as an independent republic the Mexican states of Sonora and Sinaloa with the territory of Lower California. The scheme was being backed, it was said, by Mexicans who see in it a possible means of regaining control of their huge interests in the territory embraced in the proposed new state. The report states that a fund of \$5,000,000 has been raised for carrying on this campaign and that an army is to be placed in the field soon to fight both Villa and Carranza.—The Palladium.

GREECE OFFERED 50,000 SOLDIERS

Was to Receive Vilayet of Smyrna, Under Venizelos' Proposal

London, March 16.—A Reuter despatch from Rome gives an interview with the correspondent of the Corriere della Sera has had with Fleutherios Venizelos, the former Premier of Greece, in which M. Venizelos is quoted as saying that twice since the outbreak of the war the allies have asked Greece to send men to help Serbia but the attitude of Bulgaria prevented Greece from doing so.

When the operations against the Dardanelles began the allies semi-officially enquired whether the King was disposed to intervene at the Crown Council. M. Venizelos, who was then Premier, proposed that 50,000 men should be sent to aid the allies and also urged that in return Greece should obtain the vilayet of Smyrna.

Owing to objections which were immediately raised M. Venizelos reduced his figures to 15,000 men and proposed the co-operation of the Greek navy and the use of a naval base. The entire proposal was rejected by the Crown Council and M. Venizelos resigned.

Corked With Stone

Some time ago the American gunboat Princeton ran into an uncharted rock near Pago harbor, Tulula L, and a sharp point of the rock which pierced her bottom made it impossible for her to slip off into deep water. Divers covered the rents in her bottom with canvas until the pumps gained sufficiently on the water to close them up with plank sheathing. Then the sharp point of the rock was cut off and cemented fast in the hole it had pierced and the vessel was able to make her way safely into port.

Berlin, via London, March 15.—A wireless despatch received from Constantinople says:

"It is semi-officially stated, and most emphatically, that the British war ships Agamemnon, Lord Nelson, Cornwallis and Dublin and the French ships Bouvet, Suffren and Saphir, all have been damaged in the Dardanelles fighting. The British battle ship Queen Elizabeth has been struck by three heavy shells. "The hospital ship Canada has left for Malta with numerous injured."

A wireless torpedo has lately been invented by J. H. Hammond Jr., which is capable of a speed of 23 knots when travelling awash. It carries 4,000 pounds of explosives and responds automatically to radio or searchlight waves that an enemy may direct against it. Thus it is claimed instead of a hostile dreadnought's wireless and searchlights serving to protect it they literally act as magnets, drawing the implement of destruction toward the ship.

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