

# THE NAVY'S LARDER

AND THE

## MARKETING LIST OF THE SHIP'S HOUSEWIFE

By

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It is more or less popularly supposed that, given a liberal supply of rum and a chunk of tobacco to chew, the naval sailorman cares little about food such as is consumed by those he terms so patronisingly "shore-loafers." Yet, if this be the case, why is it that fully one-sixth of a battleship's storage space is set aside to accommodate the myriad varieties of foodstuffs required for the maintenance of what is really nothing less than a floating town?

Provisions, as the sailor knows it, is a very wide term. All that the sailorman reads, smokes, wears, drinks, or eats, comes under that heading—"paymaster's stores" is its official designation. Indeed, one of the main points for consideration in the equipment of a fighting fleet is the supply of food of excellent quality, of great variety, and of sufficient quantity, as all these things are factors in giving the man behind the gun and torpedo-tube that stamina which enables him to deal the knock-out blow after he has weakened his opponent.

The two main items—indeed, the two essentials—are bread and meat. In the old days, ships took to sea with them huge quantities of hard biscuit, in many cases scores of years old, and literally crawling with weevils and other bread-eating insects, with the result that, while tons of food were wasted, the sailormen were ill-nourished. The same with beef; in the bad old times the Navy relied upon "salt horse"—as it was called—for the flesh portion of its diet; and, as an example of the age some of this stuff attained before it was consumed, I may state—and it is a fact—that I have personally been present when a cask of salt beef over eighty years old was opened and served out to a warship's complement, and,