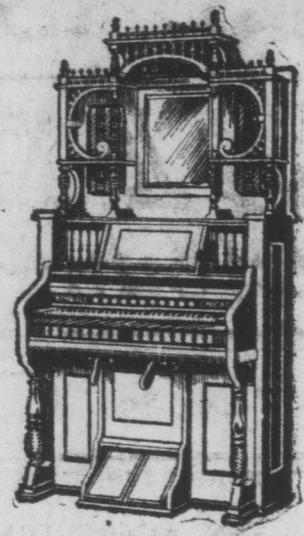


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PECULIAR HISTORY OF H.M.S. 'TRIUMPH'

How a Miscalculation in Gun Construction Was Overcome

The good ship Triumph is one more British battleship to pay toll before the Turkish gate to the Black Sea. There is only one other ship like the Triumph in the navy; and when that sister ship, the Swiftsure, has equalled the Triumph's record for effective work in the present war, the British people may feel that they made a good bargain after all when the two ships were bought in 1903.

The Triumph and Swiftsure were built in private British shipyards for Chile. They were not entirely of the same high standard as warships built for the British admiralty. They were lighter in construction, and carried a main armament of guns different from the British naval pattern. British ships comparable with the Triumph are armed with pair 12-inch guns, and they carry a secondary armament of 9.2-inch or 6-inch guns. The Triumph's main guns were pair 10-inch, with a secondary armament of 7.5-inch guns. The 10-inch gun is not favored in the British navy. Consequently the purchase of the battleships completing for Chile, and known under construction as the Libertad and Constitution, introduced an odd sized gun into the navy. Special 10-inch shells had to be manufactured, and special stores and spare parts kept for the two ships, re-named Triumph and Swiftsure.

The reason for buying two odd sized and more or less experimental battleships in 1903 is not likely to be given much publicity at the present time. They were bought just before the outbreak of war between Japan and Russia. It got abroad in the British press that Russia intended to buy them from Chile. Two such battleships added to the Russian navy might have altered the balance of power to a menacing degree against Japan. A section of the press made great outcry against Russia being allowed to acquire the Libertad and Constitution. There is no evidence that Russia actually intended to buy them. Indeed it has been said some other European power would have been the actual purchaser. But the settle the matter the British government became part of the British navy.

Now the Triumph is at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea, it is interesting to recall a peculiar feature of her 10-inch guns—a feature probably never before given to the public. Owing to a miscalculation in the design, the Triumph's 10-inchers were condemned to go about the seven seas with what might be described as a millstone around the neck of each gun. The millstone took the form of a mass of cast-iron acting as a balance weight.

In the designing of a big gun, where the barrel may weigh forty tons, or sixty or even as high as eighty tons, accurate balancing of all parts is a very important matter. A well-designed big gun is usually so accurately balanced it can be elevated and depressed by hand machinery; although it would only be in case of emergency—such as in the event of the hydraulic or electric power being cut off—that the gun crew would be called upon to operate the big twin guns by hand.

To get the balance of the gun correct to within a few pounds it is essential the gun trunnions are fixed at the right point—on the line of the centre of gravity. The trunnions are the pivot points of the gun for elevating and depressing; if they are too far forward, then obviously the breech end of the gun will outweigh the muzzle end; if the trunnions are too near the rear end, the barrel will tend to incline down toward the muzzle end. The ideal gun will lie perfectly level in its cradle with the trunnions highly finished and smoothly fitted into their bearings in the gun carriage; and, without any locking device or check, the long barrel—perhaps fifty feet long and weighing sixty tons—will be so finely balanced that the pressure of a hand will tip it up or down.

It is plain the work of calculating the true centre of gravity, for fixing the trunnions, is a task calling for the most minute accuracy. The centre of gravity of the gun barrel and all moving parts connected with the barrel, has to be worked out in the early designing of the gun—before it is made. In the old days of the cast-iron muzzle-loader the trunnions were cast on as part of the gun barrel. The modern gun is not nearly so simply constructed. The barrel is turned smooth as a piston, so that it may recoil freely when fired. In a 12-inch gun the barrel will recoil four feet—the whole sixty tons of steel barrel jumping back four feet in one-fifth of a second—and the blow of the recoil is equal to 375 tons.

To take care of such a terrific re-

NERVE-RACKING WORK ALONG YPRES CANAL

Colonel E. W. B. Morrison Describes His Position

In a letter to Mrs. Gilbert Allan, of McLeod street, Col. Morrison, D.S.O., commander of the 1st Artillery Brigade, gives an interesting account of his command. Their homes front on the Driveway and Col. Morrison's local reference in describing his position makes it quite clear.

In part the letter reads:—
"We are sleeping in deep holes cut in the Ypres canal bank so that if a 'Jack Johnson' lights it saves burial expenses. Perhaps this sounds flippant, but fater this continuous day and night performance a wound is looked on with joy, and death as pretty near what the preachers unctuously term 'a welcome release.' A British colonel commanding a 'brigade near me here has gone crazy, but up to date I am feeling fine, and my horses are safe."

"It is just as though we were dug into the banks of the canal in front of our house, and the enemy is methodically dropping shells among our brigade, as it were, from the Otawa East bridge to the Deep Cut. Each one is like a car of dynamite exploding. As they work along this way I don't know whether to be glad or sorry. However, my officers and men are working their guns as coolly and cheerfully as if firing a salute."

Shell Takes Three Men.
"Now they are 'blacksmithing' the 1st Battery and it is a tough sight. The telephonist tells me three gun sergeants are gone with one salvo. I am writing this between the lulls in the fight, not because it will interest you particularly, but it may give an idea of our life from hour to hour in this great battle. The variation consists of occasional salvos of shells containing poisonous fumes which make our eyes water and smart and our throats dry up."

"I wish some of those 'deal gently with Germany' people were there. I would shackle them to my gun wheels until they had a change of heart."

"However, give the thanks of myself and my men to our club. I know of nothing more useful they can do than make socks and make them thick, notwithstanding the warm weather. They wear longer."

"Our 1st Division has been sadly cut up, but Canada and Britain have had value received for every man who has 'gone west.' They were providentially in the right place at the right time."

"Thanks for passing on news of the brigade. I am very proud of it. No men could do their work better, and there is not a sign of let up."

THE OPINION OF MAJOR MORAHT

Germany Will Depend Largely on Artillery to Win Decisive Victories

Rotterdam, May 28.—Reviewing the war situation in the Berliner Tageblatt, Major Morahnt, while generally very optimistic, says with reference to Italy's interventions:

"Germans must not expect that in one conquering fight our flags will be carried to their goal. Good news will alternate with bad, but our confidence, which has withstood the greatest trials, need in no way be shaken."

Western Situation

As to the situation in the west, Major Morahnt says:

"The allies chose an unfavorable point in the line for their spring offensive, and the question now arises, will they try their luck in a new district when, perhaps, their Italian auxiliaries have answered their cry for help?"

Italy's Artillery

"The active artillery fighting between the Meuse and the Moselle, we must look upon as preparation for coming events by our enemies, for they can only attempt an offensive there after our artillery has been beaten down. But there is no prospect at all of this and as Italy's artillery does not stand at such a height that it can strike a decisive blow, we can answer our new enemy's guns with our usual calmness."

Division of Forces

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