

Light of the Night.

Interesting work to be done on a lightship. Well, it depends on how you look at things. Some folk might call it exactly interesting to be on a stationary vessel with miles of water all round, for two months on end at a time, with the same daily round of duties, the same half-dozen companions, and no letters or newspapers—there are times when the loneliness and monotony are just awful, and men on a lightship have been known to come almost to hate each other. Still, it is an interesting life to outsiders.

As you probably know, a lightship is sent to mark the position of a dangerous shoal, where it is not possible to erect a lighthouse, and it carries a warning light at the masthead. There are fifty-two such lightships floating at anchor round the British Isles, all of which are entirely maintained by the Elder Brethren of the Honourable Trinity Corporation. They say the crew roundly makes about £7,000 a year.

As a Ball of Fire. Rather a queer thing to look at is a lightship, in fact, it is little more than a hull with three bare movable masts. The mainmast is a good deal the tallest of the three, and it is on this that the great warning lantern is hoisted. The lantern weighs not less than half a ton, is octagonal in shape, and holds nine oil lamps of 1200 candle power. The lights are all white, and when the lantern revolves round the mast-head in the night time it is like a great ball of fire. On a clear night it is reckoned that the lantern can be seen for ten or twelve miles. The lantern is always lit when the sun begins to set.

A lightship is not a very big affair—about 120 feet long with a 24 feet beam. It does not cost as much as a dreadnought to build, to be sure; still it is not exactly a cheap toy—the usual initial cost is £12,000. There are two sorts of lightships—"day-lights," those which are powered by a steam engine, and those "in the dark," which in some parts may be seen from the coast. The only real difference being in the number of men carried. The off-lying ships have a full crew of eleven. The in-shore ships have a full crew of eight. The officers have a month aboard and then a month ashore; but the rest of us have two months afloat at a time and then a month ashore.

On the Track. Of course, all of us on board have our regular duties to perform. The lamp-man looks after the lamp, and keeps it in tip-top order; the seaman who is made signal driver keeps the engines going, and another seaman looks after the moorings and such like. If it was not for the work, there would be no bearing with the loneliness of the life. It is the duty of the lightship's crew to keep a sharp look out to see if any vessel approaches near to the dangerous shoal. Directly one is seen getting too near, we hoist two signal flags—International Code—which mean "You are standing in danger" and fire a gun repeatedly until the vessel gets into the right track again.

When we see a vessel making signals of distress, the lightship summons the aid of the coastguards or the coastguard cutter. In the day this is done by hoisting the signal flag and firing a gun at certain intervals till we get a reply. When we want to attract immediate attention in the night time we fire the gun just as the day and follow each up with a rocket. Sometimes it happens that the lightship itself requires assistance—then we fire three rockets together every quarter of an hour.

As to the pay, seamen get 4s. 1d. a day, and lamp-men from 4s. 3d. to 4s. 6d. a day, then we get our uniforms free of course, but we have to provide our food so that brings down the money. There is a pension for men of ten years' service, and when a man has put up with the monotony and loneliness of life aboard a lightship for ten years, he deserves a pension. I can tell you! It's just the monotony that wears one. Wonderful Feats of Navigation. A remarkable feat of navigation has been accomplished by Captain Charles Charlton, who sailed the Liverpool ship Harold, a vessel of 1,200 tons, laden with wheat, into Queenstown Harbour a few days ago. Captain Charlton had brought his ship from Australia, a distance of 15,000 miles, without the aid of a single officer. Efforts to find officers at Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney all failed, and the captain had no alternative but to set out for England with a crew—all but two of whom are foreigners—ignorant of navigation. The voyage lasted 108 days. For one period of six weeks the captain did not remove his clothes, and during most of the voyage he could only obtain snatches of sleep in a deck-chair by the poop of the ship.

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Fall Drives Hairpin Into Woman's Skull.

Calgary, Alta., August 7.—When the teeth of Barber, the strong man, gave way in an aerial act at the Empire Theatre yesterday afternoon, a woman swinging from a strap held in the mouth of her fellow performer fell to the stage, and received injuries which rendered her unconscious for some time and which were at first thought to be of a very serious character. A hairpin driven into her skull narrowly missed penetrating her brain.

Woman Usurer Got 2,000 per cent.

Edinburgh, Scotland, Aug. 9.—At Snethwick Police Court, Matilda Vale, of Snethwick, was charged with failing to register herself according to the provisions of the Moneylenders' Act. Mr. Sharpe, for the prosecution, explained that the woman had for some time been acting as a moneylender, lending small sums to working people. She had been charging some two pence in the shilling a week for small sums, and in some cases two shillings for five shillings. The former rate of interest was 800 per cent per annum, and the latter 2,000 per cent per annum. One woman in the witness box stated that she borrowed one pound, and paid six shillings a week interest. She did this for eight weeks, and still owed the one pound principal. Another witness who borrowed ten shillings, paid back two shillings a week. The magistrate's clerk said this was five pounds four shillings a year for five years. The magistrate considered the case a serious one and imposed a fine of 25 pounds sterling and costs.

Begger Makes Many Thousands.

New York, August 8.—At Atlantic City, recently, E. L. Jones, a one-legged man, was arrested, and fined \$10 for begging. He had been ordered away from the famous board-walk but had immediately taken station on Atlantic Avenue. He took his arrest nonchalantly, producing a roll of bills and a consigned mortgage for \$10,000.

"I have made over a hundred right here in Atlantic City," said Jones. "Have a cigar; I cleared \$10,000 on a trip through the West on a begging trip and paid off the balance on a \$15,000 ranch I own in Yanktown. My trip this time is to get \$10,000 to buy some new stock; I'll get it. He paid the fine and was helped to an out-bound train.

For five years a blind man sat on a corner of Madison Street in Chicago and begged. The police purposefully overlooked him. A runaway horse one day ran up to the sidewalk and struck him. He was six weeks in hospital. When he was discharged he began suit for damages against the owner of the horse. He almost had it won when the opposing lawyer asked him what he was doing when he was struck. He said he was engaged in his usual occupation. Pressed for reply he owned up he was begging. The only defence the opposing lawyer had, had before was that the blind man had his right on the street without an attendant. He was not making much headway in this defence.

The blind man lost when it became known that he was soliciting alms. Going out of court he evinced a most unmovable temper. He spat in the direction of the opposing lawyer and in a loud voice declared he could buy and sell him out. He showed great rolls of bills and boasted that his own net assets were worth \$50,000. The judge detached him and only refrained from punishing him for contempt of court by the greatest effort. It was afterwards learned that the man had paid for a life home in a blind institution when he should have decided to quit begging.

There was a man in St. Louis who could count and tie himself up in such shapes that he had every appearance of a paralytic, barely able to shuffle around. He frequented the busier streets and begged most profitably. Several women answered an advertisement on Sunday which offered a place to a good housekeeper. It was the "paralytic" who inserted it. He offered good wages, but one of the conditions was that the housekeeper should bring him his lunch every day. Inquiries revealed to the startled applicants that they were expected to bring the food to a street corner where their employer would be found begging. He laughed at their indignation and boasted that he had made \$65,000 at that corner and did not intend to abandon it.

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The City of Sleep.

In the City of Sleep on the hill, Bell the sunbeams, the star gleams, and showers, Comes never a vision of ill, And the years glide away like the hours: For the sleepers rock not on the strife, The heartache and trials that fill the life, To overflowing the goblet of life, In the City of Sleep on the hill. There the day-time and night-time are one, The seasons of blossom and snow, The light of the moon and the sun; The gladness of earth and its woe, We may garland their pillows with flowers, And water with tears, if we will, But they heed not such sorrows as ours, In the City of Sleep on the hill.

Oh, the City of Sleep on the hill Is a city of refuge for ill, Who weary with struggle and ill, By the wayside are ready to fall; For rest is the cry of the world— A cry that has never been still, And "Rest" has her banner unfurled, O'er the City of Sleep on the hill.

Fifty Persons Hurt in Milan Strike Riot.

Milan, August 7.—Fifty persons were wounded and a hundred arrests were made yesterday during a free fight between strikers and soldiers. The fight had its origin in the stoning of soldiers by strikers. The Duke of the Abruzzi came in for an attack at the hands of the workmen. He was driving in his automobile through the streets in the afternoon and was recognized by a band of strikers, who were holding a meeting in the street. The workmen hurled epithets at the duke and stoned his automobile until the police charged and dispersed them. The duke was uninjured.

Message Delayed.

"Strange to say," said the schoolmaster addressing his class of boys, "our brain acts as a telephone to the different parts of our body. Unconsciously, before we move our feet or hands the message comes from the brain." "Jack Murphy, what are you grinning at?" he demanded. "I was thinking of something, sir," came the answer. "Well, think of something that'll do your brain a little good!" retorted the master. "Here, come out of that!" as another grin spread itself over the saucy youngster's face. "Just stand behind the board for half an hour and I'll give you something to grin about afterwards!" At the expiration of the lesson Murphy was recalled. "Hold your hand out!" demanded the teacher, switching the cane. No response from the stolid Murphy, who appeared to be thinking hard. "Do you hear me, Murphy?" exclaimed the exasperated man. "Yes, sir," answered the nipper, a glimmer appearing in his eyes; "but my brain hasn't sent the message down yet!"

Monarchs who Used the Weed.

Paris, Aug. 8.—The "Gout Parisien" gives some amusing details of the particular smoking tastes of popular Frenchmen and foreign sovereigns. M. Briant smokes nothing but cigarettes, of all sorts; M. Pelletan, half-penny cigars; and M. Lefevre, 25-cent cigars, and now deputy for Montbrison, clay pipes, which he breaks as soon as he has finished using one. The late King Edward, it says, smoked the longest and thickest cigars ever known, they being exactly 8 1/2 in. in length and 2 1/2 in diameter. These were made expressly for His Majesty in Havana and cost \$125 each, while the workmen received 20 cents a cigar for making them. The Kaiser patronizes the same manufacturer, but his cigars are of a smaller calibre and more modest price, being only 6 1/2 in. long, and costing \$30 a hundred. The Emperor Francis Joseph has never smoked but one sort of cigar, which is a favorite with the working classes in Austria and Hungary, namely, the long, thin black article, tapering at both ends, and traversed by a straw. His Majesty can get through more of these than most men and it must be a distinctly educated taste to enjoy these "puros," which burn the tongue like a coal.

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Why There Were No Interruptions.

Mr. Roosevelt, in his autobiography, relates that when he was nominated for vice-president he addressed a meeting in one of the States of the high plains in the Rocky Mountains. Bryan was the favorite there. The audiences were rough and troublesome. At the end Mr. Roosevelt remarked with pride to the chairman: "I held that audience well. There wasn't an interruption!" To which the chairman replied: "Interruption? Well, I guess not! Seth had sent round word that if any son of a gun peeped he'd kill him." Seth had been sitting behind Mr. Roosevelt with a gun on each hip, his arms folded, looking at the audience, fixing his gaze with marvellous intensity on any section of the house from which there came so much as a whisper.

Milkmen to the Metropolis.

How London Ensures Its Daily Flood of Lactical Fluid. So much milk is sent up to London, and the price is so high, that poor people in country districts have simply to go without it. This was the startling statement made by Lady Meyer at the conference of the National Food Reform Association the other day. "But is it not surprising after all, when we remember what a mighty volume of milk the people of the Metropolis consume every year—about 112,000,000 gallons, for which they pay annually about five million pounds. There is no city of magnitude in the world that can compete against London with its milk supply."

To Fresh Fields.

About fifty years ago the milk that was consumed in London mostly came from districts within the metropolitan area. But foot and mouth disease broke out among the cows, and it was then that London experienced a real milk famine. It was at this time that a far-seeing man—Sir George Barham—thought of getting milk from the healthy cows in Wiltshire and Shropshire. Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire and Surrey Wiltshire, and Dorset, and in a few rare instances, from Scotland. The following figures represent approximately the number of churns which are brought by different railways to London every year (each churn contains about fourteen gallons of milk): Great Western Railway, 1,200,000 churns; Great Northern Railway, 400,000 churns; Midland Railway, 340,000 churns; London and Brighton Railway, 255,000 churns.

All these railways took to the enterprise from the beginning, and what then proved an ill-paying item is now one of the most flourishing; and keen competition exists in counties which are traversed by more than one railway company. Special trains led to the building of special milk vans and the movement towards sanitary insulation led to improvements, which were not dreamt of at an earlier day. Every line has its refrigerating vans with special accessories for excluding dust and all kinds of germs. The latest pattern of milk van belongs to the London and South-Western Railway. They are fitted like modern Pullmans with Westinghouse and vacuum brakes, oil-gas lamps, and the finer ventilation is even better than that of the best passenger coach.

Up With the Lark.

The farmer, or his assistant, rises early in the morning, not solely out of consideration for the crowing of the cock or rising sun; it is the exigency of railway traffic which sets the alarm. The patient kips await in the sleds the milkmaid, or man, or boy, or automatic milking machine. Patent strainers and coolers prepare the milk for transport. The cooler has taken the place of an old practice of surreptitiously dusting boracic acid into the churns. In the summer, for an imperial gallon, the farmer receives 7d. and 8d., and in winter, 9d. or 10d., delivered at the London termini, and the transportation costs him one penny per gallon.

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