



The LOOKOUT

SEAMEN'S
CHURCH
INSTITUTE
of NEW YORK

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Translating the Annual Report

Hands up, how many of you have read the Annual Report through from the first capital letter to the last period? Nobody! We suspected as much. So we have gone through it ourselves and picked out a few high lights to translate into human experience.

It requires more imagination than most of us possess to convert figures into emotions, into human suffering, human fear, human happiness. Yet we are convinced that there is no piece of literature, which comes to your desk more eloquent in terms of sorrow and joy than this same Annual Report.

And in self sacrifice.

Unlike itself our Annual Report, in this its eightieth appearance, has permitted itself to become personal. It has stepped aside from its aloof detached presentation of figures to pay a brief tribute to the men who have been largely instrumental in building up this institution to its present greatness, and who are dreaming big dreams for its expansion.

The President

You will read in the second paragraph of the report "The eightieth year of the Institute's existence is the fortieth in period of service of Edmund L. Baylies, its devoted President for the past eleven years."

We will begin by translating that sentence for you.

Mr. Baylies is a busy and successful lawyer in a very large organization—every minute of whose

time could have been filled with his own affairs if he had permitted them to occupy them to the exclusion of the welfare of his fellow men.

To this work he has given forty years of regular attendance at Board Meetings. Forty years of serving on committees. Forty years of continual interruption of his own work.

He has served as Chairman of the Executive Committee for eight years and has given eleven years of service as President of the Board of Managers.

Years of faith and vision, of saying to go ahead when neither he nor anyone else saw the means forthcoming wherewith to go ahead. Years of almost daily consultation with Dr. Mansfield as to plans and policies. It is not unusual twice or three times a day to hear the order given in the Administration Office, "Send those things at once to Mr. Baylies, by special messenger." And they go, and have precedence over his own personal business.

Years of being ready at a moments notice to step into any breach that may occur.

The Institute has well described Mr. Baylies as "Its devoted President for the last eleven years." It could hardly have said less.

The Superintendent

In the third paragraph of the Annual Report you will read, "The great expansion in the work of the Institute has occurred during the past twenty-nine years, which is the period of service of our Superintendent, the Reverend Archibald R. Mansfield, D.D."

Dr. Mansfield came to the Seamen's Church

Institute from the Seminary and from that day to this it has been both his job and his hobby. It has been the last thing he mused about at night, and his first waking thought in the morning. His has been the final responsibility for making every new vision a reality, for exploring new fields of service, for keeping his finger on the pulse of the marine world and tearing down and building up as a changing society made new demands upon this institution. He has not only been the buffer between the Board of Managers and the human instruments they were obliged to use to realize their dreams, but he has been a buffer in a national sense between the seaman and the landsman. He has made the contacts of the Institute so wide that sooner or later every injustice to a seaman comes to his attention, and whether it is legal, social, or physical he sets about investigating and repairing. And this he has labored at for twenty-nine years, from early morning until the small hours of the night. True, it was his job, but it need not have been. More than once people came to him with petitions that he consider other positions, which would have been much more advantageous to him personally, but he turned his back on all such offers. Twenty-nine years, during which the Institute has grown from little isolated stations serving a comparatively small number, to a sixteen story building housing 836 men daily—and still growing.

The Treasurer

Continuing its appreciation of long service the Annual Report says, "Frank T. Warburton,

our Secretary and Treasurer, has completed thirty-seven years of able and devoted service."

Thirty-seven years of being faithful and loyal in attendance at meetings and twenty years in the arduous work of Treasurer of the Society.

Religious Services

"The directly religious work has, during the past year, included two services in the chapel on Sunday and one weekly night service."

To the value of religious work it is impossible to apply the measuring rod of figures. One cannot say so much seed sown on good ground and such and such an harvest reaped. Two tares weeded out in the morning service and one tonight. The seed is sown here today and the harvest reaped a year, two years, three years from now in Poland, in Germany, in Holland, in Russia. And the sower never knows which seed grew and which perished. And often the reaper has himself forgotten. The great sower and the great reaper alone remembers.

Social Service

"Social Service transactions during the year number approximately 25,000."

To translate just one of 25,000 into the experience of a single human being, there was the case of Raynor Kjorsvig, who arrived at Snug Harbor after breasting heavy legal seas, with our chaplain as pilot.

Snug Harbor, as you know, is a very desirable port for old or disabled seamen to reach, but not all who set out for it arrive at their destination.

The Harbor is obliged to set a certain limit, a definite number of years of provable sea service either from American ports or on American ships.

Ragnar had had the required service, but there was some difficulty in proving it. The Social Service Worker at the Marine Hospital had begun to collect the necessary papers, and we supplemented her efforts by getting a copy of the log of the American ship on which Ragnar had met with the accident, which partially paralyzed, and completely disabled him for sea service, also by writing to the Board of Governors of the Harbor to the effect that we knew this man to be the sort of decent deserving seaman for whom that institution was originally intended.

And then there came the day when Ragnar received word that his application had been favorably considered. He did not talk much, because the paralysis has partly reached his mind, and his thoughts and speech are like a slow moving picture, but he went from one worker to another with a look of utter beatitude on his face, as he displayed the notice.

Yesterday he came to say, "Good-bye" and "Thank you," leaving a trail of sympathetic smiles behind him.

And one old man, otherwise destitute and alone in the world, is guaranteed food and shelter to the end of his days.

Ways and Means Department

"It is the business of this committee, not only to retain old friends and contributors but to constantly find new subscribers."

Round about 9:30 o'clock of any week day you

will find the young woman in charge of this work sitting in a tense attitude waiting to see how many dollars the mail has brought in. If the morning is in one of those financially arid months, July or August, she may even be a little pale. Sometimes the day is lightened by a very big check and even a bad day may be made brighter by such a gay communication as that which follows:

Dear Sir:

I have received your favor of the 22nd inquiring as to whether you have in any way offended me by your several requests for money for the Seamen's Church Institute, of your city. Gosh, no. I am not that thin skinned. I have a hide like a rhinosceros and it takes a whole lot more than a polite "touch" to make me see red. To be plain with you, my financial scow has been on the rocks for some months, lashed by the storm ridden waves with, I fear, no hope of any salvage. I have sent out S O S's and shot roman candles and torn my shirt to shreds trying to signal sympathetic skippers along the lanes of travel, but all to no good, so far. But I am hanging onto the riggin' hoping that some day a friendly bark will hove in sight that will throw out the life line and tow me into the port of happiness, out of this Saragossa of Trouble and Worry. *That's* why you have not heard from me, but I might have told you all this long ago and saved you some trouble and postage.

Some day I may surprise you with a little check, but I fear you will have to depend on the kindness of others for awhile, who are riding the crest of the sea better than I.

I am doing the next best thing and sending you a couple of names of orthodox Episcopalians who can and should, "kick in" freely and often. If you wish, you can tell them this old Covenanter Presbyterian is a believer in your Institution and has helped you in times past. It won't prejudice them and may get you a little money. I believe your Institute is backed by the Episcopal Church. Mr. _____, especially, is very wealthy and a devout Episcopalian. I tell him he wrote the Apostle's Creed, but he says I am wrong. He merely suggested it.

With all good wishes for your success,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) W. B. R.

X
A New Scene for an Old Setting

The curtain has gone up this month on the eighty-second year of the work of the Institute—a new scene in an old setting—the setting that for the past twelve years has brought many a change in the drama of Sailordom on South Street.

Spring has lent her properties to the scene, everywhere are signs of change and growth. Atop the vast bulk of the Institute the signal flags dance to the willful measure of the Southern wind; Jeanette Park's green branches wave a response. And somewhere down on South Street comes a hurdy-gurdy's tune—a certain sign that spring has come. Along the park curb the "oyster man" displays his wares, fresh and crisp as the cool spring winds that wander on the waterfront and lose themselves in the chasms of the city inland. And all along the harbor comes the smell of hemp and tar and paint that spells spring furnishings for sea craft. Even the tug boat's hoot takes on a merrier note with the first hints of warmth in the air, while traffic along the waterfront seems to feel also the quickening pulse of spring.

In the Institute lobby, the compass in the floor bares its face—unfailing sign of the changing tide of seasons. All during the long winter when seamen fill every inch of lobby space, it could not be seen for feet. But with spring in the air, sailors' steps are drawn with magnetic precision toward Jeanette Park benches to bask in the sun's tawny warmth, to "yarn" with a crony, or to watch the new operations on Front Street.

Here all is activity. Great boilers higher than a man's head, workmen's sheds, masses of timbers, small coughing engines gulping water from the excavation—all these line the pavement. Where once stood the complacent row of little

brick houses, move the tireless arms of a crane—a giant obedient to his overalled master.

Shouts, orders, movements; men here, there, digging, sawing, operating the excavator whose hungry mouth eats up brick, stone, loose earth, feeds empty trucks, and returns to its insatiable gnawing of the earth. Steadily the entrenchments deepen, for steel and cement must lie deep bedded, sure footed to uphold the shaft of stone and brick that the architects have planned.

These are the properties, the mechanical devices that are setting the stage for the most important scene in the life of the Institute.

These are factors in the far-reaching drama of sea life ashore in which you play a part.

Back of the pulsing engines, the shouting men, the sharp reverberations of the riveter, is the great dynamic force of those who have helped make building operations possible. Maybe you were one of them. Or if you wanted to see operations begun before lending your force and help, you may be certain there's still much to do. The largest, most unique marine institution in the world—it cannot be completed in a few weeks.

The creative force, the financial reservoir that supplies the present building operations, has come in amounts large and small, from East and West, from many interested friends of the Institute. But there is not enough.

Have you joined forces yet? Have you yet lent your influence?

The drama story of the Institute plays to the world at large. Its force goes wherever steam or sail penetrate. It is for all Americans and for all seamen of the world.

There are many parts still waiting for an actor, many roles wanting to be filled.

There is still a speaking part for you.

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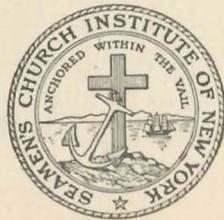
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