

# The LOOKOUT



An Unusual View of "25 South Street"

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

THIS MONTH'S COVER shows an unusual view of the Institute through the masts, spars and rigging of the Spanish Training Ship, Juan Sebastian de Elcano, which was docked at Pier 8, East River, while on her annual Spring visit to Manhattan. Photo by Samuel Gottscho.

**The LOOKOUT**  
PUBLISHED MONTHLY  
by the  
**SEAMEN'S CHURCH  
INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK**  
25 SOUTH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y.  
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Superintendent

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**MARJORIE DENT CANDEE**  
Editor, THE LOOKOUT

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"The Lookout."

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Address all communications to  
**SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
OF NEW YORK**  
25 South Street

**LEGACIES TO THE INSTITUTE**

You are asked to remember this Institute in your will, that it may properly carry on its important work for seamen. While it is advisable to consult your lawyer as to the drawing of your will, we submit nevertheless the following as a clause that may be used:

I give and bequeath to "**Seamen's Church Institute Of New York,**" a corporation of the State of New York, located at 25 South Street, New York City, the sum of.....Dollars."

Note that the words "**Of New York**" are a part of our title. If land or any specific property such as bonds, stocks, etc., is given, a brief description of the property should be inserted instead of the words, "the sum of.....Dollars."

It is to the generosity of numerous donors, and testators that the Institute owes its present position, and for their benefactions their memory will ever be cherished by all friends of the seaman.

PLEASE NOTE: We wish to announce that the Board of Managers of the Institute has decided to omit the August issue of THE LOOKOUT. This is in keeping with our policy of retrenchment because of our limited funds. The Institute is facing a large deficit and must therefore economize at every point. Subscribers, however, will receive twelve issues of THE LOOKOUT for one dollar—the date of expiration of their subscription will be moved ahead one month. The September issue will appear on schedule.

# The Lookout

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VOL. XXIV                      JULY, 1933                      No. 7

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## Important Notice!

**W**E find that some of our contributors and also subscribers to THE LOOKOUT are still confusing our corporation, the SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK, with the Seamen's Church Institute of America, which formerly occupied a room in our building at 25 South Street but which now has its office at 80 Broad Street. It is to the interest of all concerned that it be clearly understood that the two "Institutes", though bearing similar names, have no affiliation or connection with each other.

It is our corporation that owns and operates at 25 South Street, New York City, the largest institute or home for merchant seamen in the world, founded in 1843, and it is we who publish THE LOOKOUT.

Our Institute is frequently called "Seamen's Institute" or "Seamen's Church Institute", but to prevent confusion it is earnestly requested that all who have occasion to send us letters or checks, or subscriptions for THE LOOKOUT, or who desire to write the name of our Institute in wills, should use our full corporate title SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK. The address is 25 South Street, New York City.



## THE HOUSE OF A THOUSAND MEMORIALS

THE Institute has been appropriately called "The House of a Thousand Memorials" for there is scarcely a corner in the entire building that is not a continual reminder of the generosity of some friend of merchant seamen. Bronze tablets with interesting inscriptions may be found in every room and on every floor of our building. The personal incidents back of these memorials run the gamut of human experience, are of absorbing interest and, if printed, would fill several volumes. In many cases, these stories cannot be told out of deference to those to whom these memorials are sacred. They range from valorous deeds of daring in war and in peace, heroic rescues at sea and notable achievements on land, loving recognition of great lives of devotion unheralded to the world, to the gift, by a little one, of a seaman's bedroom which bears the simple inscription, "FROM A LITTLE CHILD, J. K.," all give a glimpse of the past that serves to whet the imagination and cause one to wish that the veil might be pushed aside.

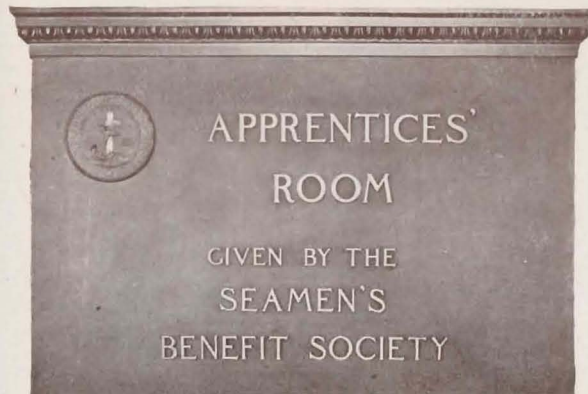


The main entrance with its three ship's lights, head light, port and starboard lights, has a tablet with this inscription:

"This Entrance Is The Gift Of  
WILLIAM G. Low  
In Memory of  
A. A. Low  
February 7, 1811 - January 7, 1893

Three Times President Of The New York Chamber of Commerce His Swift Clipper Ships Sailed The Wide Seas For Many Years."

Above the main doorway hangs the Bell from the steamboat *Atlantic* which was lost off New London, November 27, 1846, forty-two of her passengers and crew perished. The ship was found on the rocks off Fisher's Island, and there, all alone



"Given by Frederick Wallingford Whitridge, in memory of his great, great Uncle, Lieutenant Richard Wallingford, U.S.N., of U. S. Man-of-War 'Ranger', Commander John Paul Jones; killed on April 24th, 1778, in the engagement with H.M.S. Drake in the first naval battle ever fought under the American flag."

Masonic and other fraternal organizations, churches and clubs,

with its wreck, the old Bell was tolling a melancholy requiem for the victims of the sea.

Also above the doorway is a figurehead of Sir Galahad. (See story on page 5, "Our Sir Galahad Mystery".)

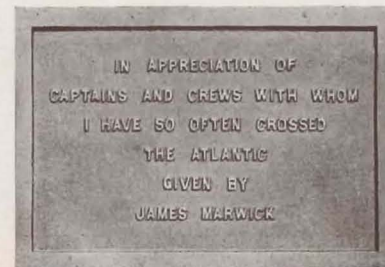
Inside the main lobby of the Institute one finds many interesting memorials, particularly in the Chapel of Our Saviour, where organ, altar, lamps, floor, and nearly every chair contain bronze tablets paying tribute to the memory of loved ones—mothers, fathers, sisters, and grandfathers who were sea captains, shipbuilders or ship merchants.

Dormitories and officers' rooms have impressive tablets on their doors. There are memorials to Naval Commanders, Commodores, Lieutenants, Captains and Polar Explorers. For example, an officer's room is

have donated some of the bedrooms in the building. Survivors of ship disasters have given memorials as thank offerings. Drinking fountains, clocks, bowling alleys, reading rooms, barber shop, billiard tables, piano, and many other objects contain memorial inscriptions.

Not always are the inscriptions paying tribute to those who have gone beyond. The names of Captain "Bob" Bartlett and other marine men appear, rooms in their honor, given by the American Geographical Society, Explorers' Club, Museum of The American Indian Heye Foundation, etc.

Some of the inscriptions are most touching in the sentiments they express, such as "Granny's Room"; "In loving memory of a dear sailor brother"; "This room is named after William Merrony, a British seaman



of high character. His sister waited forty years. His last ship never reported"; "In tender memory of an eager youth who loved adventure and the sea, Dana Hubbard Kelly"; "Presented as a thank offering for many blessings and much happiness"; "In memory of Captain William Henry Hayes, Clipper Ship 'Rainbow'. Cleared March 15, 1848 for Valparaiso and China, never reported. Given by Irving Smith."

In the Navigation School, on the top floor, overlooking the harbor is this inscription:

"This Additional Story Was Given  
In Memory Of

MEREDYTH

Who Died April 12, 1916

The Only Child Of

FRANCIS MEREDYTH AND MARY ARMOUR

WHITEHOUSE

And Grandson Of

THE RIGHT REVEREND HENRY JOHN

WHITEHOUSE

DD, LLD, Cantab DD Oxon

A Vice-President in 1844 Of The Seamen's Church Institute of New York. This Memorial Gift Was Made By His Loving Parents Because Of His Deep Interest In The Life And Welfare of Seamen. AD 1917."

The names of the two seamen, Uno Wirtenen and Fritz Steger, of the crew of the S. S. Roosevelt who lost their lives in the rescue of the S.S. Antinoe appear on a tablet.

High above the Institute shines the Cross, mounted on three steps, with this inscription:



### "THE CROSS

Shining Skyward and Seaward

From this house of Christian service as a symbol of our faith, hallowing for all time heroism of those who go down to the sea and endure all things for others, is given in memory of

GEORGE STEVENS SCHERMERHORN and  
JULIA GIBERT SCHERMERHORN

by their son Arthur Frederic Schermerhorn  
and  
His wife, Harriet Pullman Schermerhorn."

Rooms paying tribute to the Titanic sufferers, Band of Musicians, wireless operator, crew of the Titanic, etc. abound. There is one given by Francis R. Appleton that reads:



"In memory of Captain Edward J. Smith, R.N.R., who lost his life while in command of the S. S. Titanic, April 15, 1912. He sailed the sea for forty years, faithful in duty, friendly in spirit, firm in command, fearless in disaster. He saved the women and children, and went down with his ship. Given by F.R.A."

But perhaps the best known memorial atop our building is the Titanic Memorial Tower, whose beacon light shines far out at sea, bidding lonely sailors "Welcome Home," with its inscription:

"This Lighthouse Tower  
Is A Memorial To  
The Passengers, Officers and Crew

Of The Steamship Titanic  
Who Died As Heroes  
When That Vessel Sank  
After Collision With An Iceberg  
Latitude 41° 46' North  
Longitude 50° 14' West  
April 15, 1912.

ERECTED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION  
1915"

The Institute still owes over one million dollars on its thirteen-story Annex building. Those who wish to give to the Building Fund may select any of the following objects which are still available. These will be marked by bronze tablets inscribed according to the donor's wishes.

Nurses' Room in Clinic.....	\$ 3,000.
Additional Clinic Rooms .....	3,000.
Chapel Memorial Windows .....	3,000.
Sanctuary and Chancel.....	3,000.
Endowed Seamen's Rooms, each.....	4,000.
Officers' Rooms, each .....	1,000.
Seamen's Rooms with running water, each.....	750.
Seamen's Rooms, each .....	300.
Chapel Chairs, each .....	30.

For those desiring to select larger memorials there are available:

Seamen's Reading and Game Room.....	\$20,000.
Cafeteria .....	10,000.

## OUR SIR GALAHAD MYSTERY

A apparently perfect solution to a mystery—the origin of our ship's figurehead, "Sir Galahad" which is mounted over the entrance to the Institute. An interesting controversy has been started among marine experts due to the publishing in the newspapers of a statement that the old figurehead had been definitely traced through an old sea captain's chart to the privateer brig, "Galahad," built in Marblehead, 1749.

Mr. Charles R. Patterson, noted marine artist, was the first to call to the Institute's attention several discrepancies in this solution. First of all, he pointed out that the figurehead, which is more than life-size, could not possibly have been on a small brig of about 300 tons. In his

opinion the figurehead came from an American clipper ship of about 1860 of at least 1,500 tons, but a diligent search among old records and registries revealed no square-rigged ship, or bark, with the name of "Galahad."

Mr. Patterson gives as his reason for believing the figurehead to be from an American or Canadian wooden ship the fact that the figure is shown stepping forward, the forward foot resting on a billet head. To his knowledge no British built ship used this adaptation of the human figure, the



Drawing by Capt.  
E. A. McCann

(Continued on page 8)

# Hunger Knows No Season!



Courtesy, Schneider Studio

THE hot July sun shimmers on the pavements of South, Front and Water Streets in the little park at Coenties Slip, in the alleys up to Platt, and beyond to Dover Street. But all along the waterfront hungry seamen are standing hours on end in desultory conversation or solemnly staring riverward—waiting and waiting.

This is the vacation season and it is so easy for people to think that warm weather means the lessening of suffering among the unemployed. It is true that they can sleep in the parks more comfortably than in the winter, but *hunger knows no season*, and they still must eat.

In other words the Institute must continue to provide free meals for hundreds of men and ten cent meals for those who still wish and can pay something. These meals must be nourishing and well-balanced. Yet we must pay the butcher, the baker, the grocer. We are depending on the generosity of our many friends to see us through these summer months.

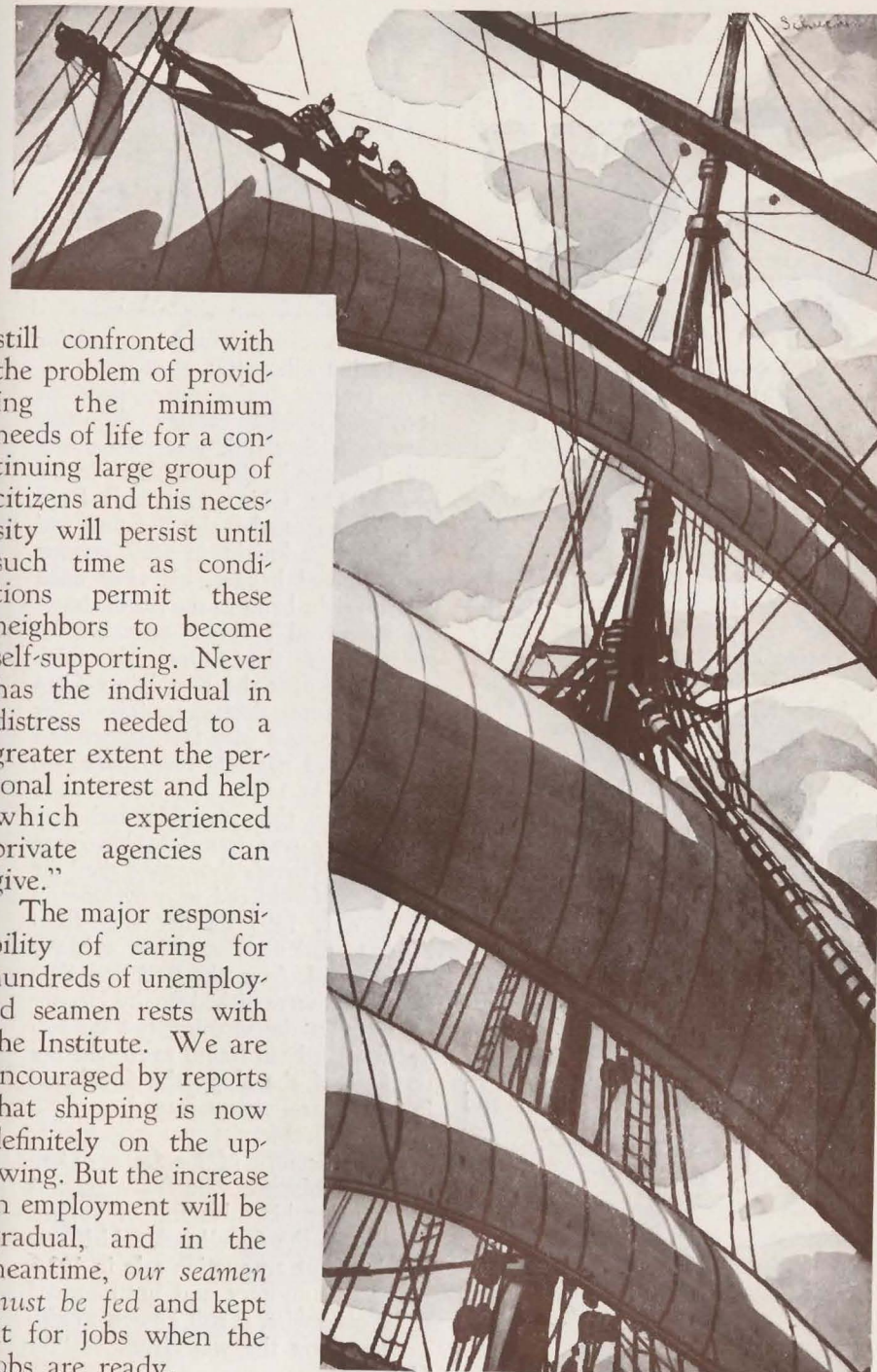
As Mr. Harvey Gibson said in a recent newspaper article: "Unfortunately, even with improving business conditions, unemployment and widespread distress therefrom will continue for many months. The situation has become more than a passing emergency for we are

I can forego one picnic or party on my vacation in order that hungry seamen may be fed. Here is \$.....for ten cent meals.

Name .....

Address .....

(Kindly make checks payable to: "Seamen's Church Institute of New York" and mail to 25 South Street.)



still confronted with the problem of providing the minimum needs of life for a continuing large group of citizens and this necessity will persist until such time as conditions permit these neighbors to become self-supporting. Never has the individual in distress needed to a greater extent the personal interest and help which experienced private agencies can give."

The major responsibility of caring for hundreds of unemployed seamen rests with the Institute. We are encouraged by reports that shipping is now definitely on the upswing. But the increase in employment will be gradual, and in the meantime, *our seamen must be fed* and kept fit for jobs when the jobs are ready.

Courtesy, White Star Line

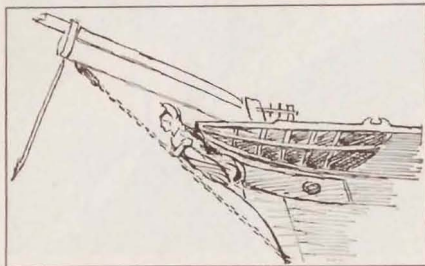
tendency among British designers being to incorporate the lines of the draperies or legs, etc. into the sweep of the vessel's bow, in as nearly as possible an unbroken line. (See illustrations.)

The American ships "David Crockett," "Great Admiral," "Seminole," "Paul Jones," and a number of others had figureheads showing figures stepping forward much in the manner of the old cigar store Indians, and it was distinctly North American in type.

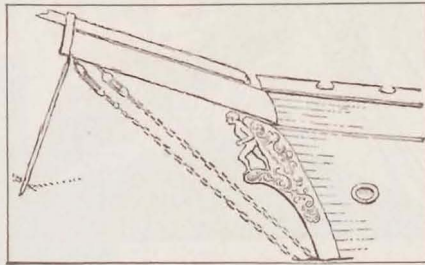
Mr. Patterson also points out that the figure of the knight would not necessarily have to be named after any particular personage, but might be called The Crusader, The Conqueror, or some more general term.

Then the moustache came into the story. A physician, whose hobby is marine books and relics, advanced the theory that the figurehead, since it had a moustache, was not Sir Galahad at all, but Sir Lancelot, the father of Galahad. He referred to "Morte D'Arthur" and to Watts' famous painting which depicted Galahad as a smooth faced young boy. Further credence was given this theory by Mr. Irving R. Wiles, portrait painter, who agreed with Mr. Patterson that the figurehead must have come from a clipper.

Other experts who concurred with Mr. Patterson's opinion, when shown the chart are: Gordon Grant, marine artist, Summer Healey, antique dealer, Gregory Kirchner, wood carver and



Drawings by C. R. Patterson



Captain R. Stuart Murray, noted for his marine silhouettes.

A famous tea clipper, built in 1865 in Robert Steele's shipyard, Greenock, Scotland, was named the "Sir Lancelot." Basil Lubbock in his book, "The China Clipper," Page 214, describes the ship's figurehead as being "a knight in mail armour with plumed helmet, his visor open and his right hand in the act of drawing his sword." This is an exact description of the figurehead which now looks over the East River from the Institute doorway. The "Sir Lancelot" was a very fast clipper and made record passages from China in 1867 and in 1869.

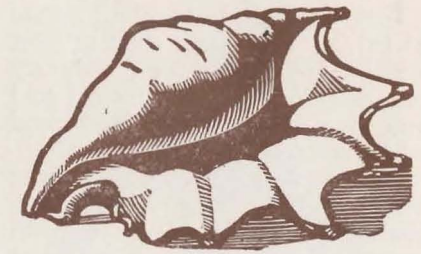
But alas, this plausible and perfect theory was found to have one big flaw: Records show that the "Sir Lancelot" foundered in a cyclone on October 1, 1895 on her way from Muscat, Calcutta, carrying a heavy cargo of salt from the Red Sea. Several bodies were picked up, by Hooghly pilots in the vicinity, but no record has yet been found as to whether portions of the ship—the figurehead in particular—were salvaged.

Mr. I. J. Merritt gave the figurehead in memory of his father, Captain I. J. Merritt, who for years was famous for his salvaging of sunken vessels. So the figurehead, which was purchased at an auction sale in 1926, remains a mystery and until proved to be otherwise, is still known to sailormen along the waterfront as "Sir Galahad."

## SURVIVORS

**A**NASTICIO Q., a Spanish seaman from Porto Rico, has been out of work for over a year and has been trying to combat the depression by shining the shoes of seamen at the Institute. Most of the sailors can pay him only five cents for a shine and he averages seventy to eighty cents a day. His best day is when he receives a dollar, or shines twenty pairs of shoes. On this he must live and support a boy seventeen years old who is living with him but who cannot find work. His wife and two other children are living in San Francisco, trying to run a boarding house, but are not meeting with much success. Anasticio is fifty-five years old, very emaciated, with hair graying at the temples.

The other day, as he was busily applying the shoe blacking, he chanced to look up into the face of his customer and there saw Enrico W. whom he had not seen since 1927 when he and Enrico were the only two survivors of the ship "Elkton" of the American Pioneer Line which was lost in a typhoon about five hours out of Manila. Anasticio had been an oiler and Enrico had been a wiper. The "Elkton", as Anasticio explained it, was empty of cargo and she foundered only two or three minutes after being hit by the typhoon. He was in his undershirt and slippers and was tossed overboard. In the water he found a



hatch and clung to it. Suddenly he heard a shout for help and reaching down he pulled the other man up to the hatch. They both clung to the hatch until picked up by a coast guard cutter which had been summoned to look for survivors of the ship "Negros" which had also been lost in the typhoon with one hundred and fifty Filipino students aboard.

Enrico and Anasticio embraced and exchanged experiences since they had not seen each other from the day of the rescue. Enrico had just been paid off on the "Republic" (U. S. Army Transport) where he has a job as assistant engineer. As soon as he recognized his friend, Anasticio, he paid him a dollar for his shine and has since dropped in to see him several times.

Anasticio hopes to get a job at sea for then he will earn enough so that his family can be in New York and he can see them between voyages. He speaks practically no English so we were told his story through an interpreter, Captain A. O. Morasso, who is the head of the Institute's Employment Bureau, and who speaks Spanish fluently. Captain Morasso, himself, is the sole survivor of the American sailing ship, "Macona," which was wrecked off the coast of Sweden January 18, 1920.



Woodcuts by Freda Bone in "Bowsprit Ashore" by Alexander Bone. Doubleday Doran & Co., Publishers

## MELTING POT NEWS

THE Melting Pot campaign has thus far earned for the Institute \$1,265.04. Isn't this news fit to print without any prelude or preliminary remarks? Yes, our hunt for old gold and silver has succeeded far beyond our expectations.

In these days when we are hearing much talk of bimetallism our only concern is to find enough of both metals to buy meals, pay bills, and to furnish our seamen with other necessities and comforts—to give the clouds of depression a silver lining so to speak. For this reason, the best news of all is that our hunt is going right on, and the fund is growing bigger all the time. As we go to press, the mail brings us a box of gold and silver from "up state," and before *The Lookout* reaches you, we may have reached \$1,300.00—a lucky number.

Of course you want to know how we are distributing our wealth. Dr. Mansfield was given \$1,000.00 for the Mansfield Fund, the income from which is used for relief. This presentation was made by Mrs. H. Schuyler Cammann, Chairman of the Central Council of Associations, at a luncheon which followed the May meeting of the Council. In presenting this check, Mrs. Cammann told Dr. Mansfield how pleasant it was to think that the old gold and silver jewelry and trinkets which made the gift possible and which in many cases had belonged to those who had been loved and lost, were still serving a purpose, giving cheer to needy seamen.

For the money over and above the \$1,000.00 given for relief we have at least a thousand uses. It will be divided into various parts, each part assigned to some urgent Institute need. First there is the mangle in the laundry to be cared for. After 5 years of constant service, this useful machine which smooths out thousands of towels and sheets a day, just naturally gave

out. The work of repairing and replacing the worn-out parts cost \$133.00, a bill which our Melting Pot Fund can easily meet.

And we can do more—how much more depends on those who read and heed this appeal. May we remind you that broken and out of date pieces of gold and silver serve our purpose quite as well as do whole or modern articles. Precious metals do not lose their intrinsic value with age. Any little old "gadgets," as one donor termed her gifts, which you find lying about, useless to you, are useful to us.

Two key-winder watches with double cases which had seen service with sea-captains brought us over \$30.00 each. The closed-case variety of ladies' watches bring as high as \$15.00, but the tiny open-faced ones of modern times bring only a fifth of that amount. Can't you see why we prefer the old-timers?

But we are grateful for every speck we receive. No miser ever gloated over his gold as we do over what is sent us. Cuff links, stick pins, watch chains and fobs, shirt studs, and bits of dentistry have a marvellous way of mounting into dollars. Even one gold filling netted us \$2.70. Most encouraging too is the fact that sterling silver has increased in value from 18 to 24 cents an ounce since last Fall.

Let us persuade you to get into this game with us. Let us see what we can mend besides the mangle.

*Every particle of gold and silver counts, and every ounce or fraction thereof which you send will help the Institute directly. There are no campaign expenses.* The Central Council of Associations who began this benefit and are sponsoring it are paying all printing and postage charges. Your gift will be clear gain for the Institute.

Address your communications and gifts to The Melting Pot Committee, 25 South Street, New York.

## ALL ABOUT ASTROLABES

ASTROLABES—a strange word—unknown to most of us—unless, perhaps you have come across it while solving a cross word puzzle. Or unless you are learned in astronomy. The average person, when asked pointblank "What is an astrolabe" will usually hazard the guess that it is some kind of an animal from the zoo.

Mr. Samuel V. Hoffman, one of the Institute's generous friends, has a most unique collection of over forty astrolabes. But he keeps them in his office safe! Not to keep our readers in suspense any longer, let us hasten to say that an astrolabe is not a member of the animal kingdom, but is an instrument for stellar, solar and lunar altitude-taking used principally by mariners, desert tribes and astronomers in Persia and India years ago. Their chief use was to ascertain the exact position of Mecca when travelling on the desert, in order that they might face the holy city at the worship hour. These historic instruments, as illustrated on this page, were the predecessors of the compass and sextant.

Since 1895 Mr. Hoffman has made the collecting of astrolabes his hobby. While a student at Johns Hopkins University he had made a visit to Paris and chanced upon one of the old astrolabes in an antique shop which started him in his search for others and thus he gradually built up his collection.

But lest readers think that astrolabes are remote and ancient objects hardly to be considered of importance, may we point out that the city of Jamestown, Virginia, was founded in 1607, and the first settlers under the leadership of Captain John Smith landed there instead of along the New England coast, because of an astrolabe! The last two weeks



of their journey from England the voyagers endured a steady and heavy fog. They had set their course, previously, for the north. But with neither sun, moon, nor stars to guide the navigator in ascertaining their position by means of the astrolabe, they went off their course and in a gale their ship was blown into the mouth of Chesapeake Bay. By such events is the course of history changed. The photograph on this page is of a mariner's astrolabe, used by Samuel de Champlain, French explorer, pioneer and first governor of French Canada, in his explorations. Astrolabes range in price from \$75. to \$5,000. depending on their age and the rarity of the particular design.

The mariner's astrolabe was used by Columbus when he sought to discover a new route to the West Indies and found, instead, a new Continent. The land instruments were a marvel of convenience and ingenuity and were used in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries but small ones, resembling overgrown watches, are



still used in Persia today by wise men and desert travelers. They are suspended by a cord or chain.

Chaucer, the father of English poetry, wrote the first authentic book in English on astrolabes, and it can be found in Skeet's edition of Chaucer. The poet lucidly explains to his young nephew the geometrical principles of computing latitude, measuring heights of mountains and buildings, and ascertaining distances and constructing horoscopes. Astrolabes vary in diameter from about two inches to a foot. They are made of brass and are intricately carved. In one of the "Arabian Nights Tales" the barber tells of using an astrolabe to decide what time to shave his patrons.

Mr. Hoffman has astrolabes with Persian, Latin, French, German and Arabic inscriptions. He would have had several Greek ones had not they been stolen by robbers on the Arabian desert several years ago when his agent was bringing them by caravan from Persia. The favorite inscription used on Eastern astrolabes was: "There is no God but God; Mohammed is the Prophet of God; Ali is the friend of God." Signs of the zodiac, days of the month, and other information are carved in the brass. The Persian astrolabes are hollow, and contain four thin brass discs called tables or climates on which are skillfully engraved curious mathematical symbols and different latitudes. The front (see illustration) has a rete or "spider" which is really a network of star pointers indicating the principal stars. A pin known as a "horse" or wedge passing through a bolt holds all the plates together. The mariner's astrolabe was superseded by John Hadley's quadrant of 1731.

The most interesting astrolabe in Mr. Hoffman's collection, at least, to this writer's mind, is a defective one containing numerous brass discs with incompleting mathematical problems thereon. It was probably owned by a student who seemed to have had his difficulties with geometry. Remembering our own troubles with this most exact science, we heartily sympathize with his inability to complete the problems!

#### A SAILOR TAKES TO THE LAND

Dear Dr. Mansfield:

This is to let you know I am making out fine in the C C C forestry army. I have left the \$1 a day status and am getting \$60 a month as company clerk and mail orderly. Considering all my clothing and necessities are supplied free, even to toothpaste, it about equals the average pay of a wireless operator. There is also a possibility of my getting a better

job as this new experiment gets under way further and creates more positions.

I will close with best regards to yourself, and with thanks for helping me out. I don't know the name of the gentleman who signed me up there for the army so will you please tell him I'm glad I signed up?

Very sincerely,  
(Signed) Raymond E.  
Company Clerk.

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in a summer vacation...



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"WHITE CRUISE QUEEN"

FAMOUS WORLD CRUISING LINER

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sails from New York July 29 and Aug. 26 (from Boston day later) to Saguenay River, Capes Eternity and Trinity, Quebec, St. Pierre et Miquelon, Bermuda... also Aug. 12 (from Boston Aug. 10) to Havana, Nassau and Bermuda.

\$125 up

FIRST CLASS  
THROUGHOUT

\$105 up

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CUNARD  LINE

25 Broadway, New York

Note: When making reservations for any of the above Cruises will you kindly mention that you saw this advertisement in THE LOOKOUT?



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