

# The LOOKOUT

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

VOL. XXVIII NO. 5

MAY, 1937

This Month's Cover shows some of the Crew of the "Joseph Conrad" aloft in the rigging. Reproduced by permission of Captain Alan Villiers and the National Geographic Magazine.

## The LOOKOUT

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SEAMEN'S CHURCH  
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SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
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### 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," incorporated under the laws 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.

# The Lookout

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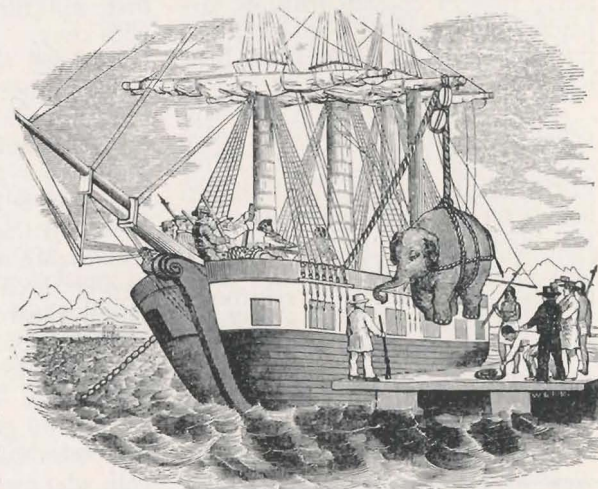
NO. 5

## Seagoing Horses and Elephants

JACK HARE of the American Merchant Line thought he would retire last year from his job of caring for race horses and polo ponies that are shipped across the Atlantic. He'd been on the job for twenty-five years and the prospect of settling down with his family appealed to him. The United States Lines, loath to lose such a clever horse trainer, gave him a retainer with the understanding that whenever thoroughbred and valuable horses were to be shipped, he could be on call. The result is, that Hare cannot keep away from the horses and the ships.

Talking with Jack the other day we asked if horses suffer from seasickness. He replied, "Just as humans do, but not to the same extent. Many horses simply want to lie down, and they don't care to eat." We inquired whether a horse's seagoing diet was the same as on land, and the trainer replied: "Practically. I feed them hay, oats and bran, and give them plenty of linseed." "What about foreign horses?" we questioned. "Do you have to speak their native tongue in order to manage them?" "Oh no," was the answer. "Almost every horse in Europe understands English, especially the well-bred ones. Such horses usually have English grooms."

Loading horses is a treacherous business, particularly at high tide



HOISTING ELEPHANTS ON SHIPBOARD.

Reprinted from "South Street"  
By Richard McKay

when the gangplank is at a steep angle. Polo ponies are the easiest to handle. Their training and courage make them willing to go anywhere. The greatest danger is not that the horse will jump overboard—they're too sensible for that—but that, he may lie down on the gangplank. Rates for shipping horses vary just like passenger fares; they may go steerage or first cabin.

A group of young Belgians in the Institute's Apprentices' Room told how Belgian farm horses are shipped to America aboard the S.S. Emile Francqui and the S.S. Henri Jaspars each summer. Farmers' buyers from the middle West go over to Belgium, select those horses which are noted for their strength and sturdiness, and bring them back aboard Belgian ships. The horses are no longer hoisted aboard. This method is

*A Vacation Hint to Sea Voyagers: A Thank Offering to Seamen, for Safe Arrival.*



passé. The gangplank is covered with peat moss when the horses are loaded. They used to cover it with straw, but the horses ate the straw and got colic, so the peat moss is a big improvement. On the well deck heavy rolls of coconut matting, tarpaulin and blankets are spread so the horses won't slip and break their legs.

An old-time sailorman, who happened to overhear our conversation about horses, volunteered the information that he used to transport horses on the old Minnewaska and the Minnetonka. He also recalled that he once carried a troop of elephants and a specially reinforced gangway had to be built, explaining that an elephant will not step on anything that wobbles. He always tests first with one foot and will not proceed on what is not solid. This is pretty smart of the elephant in view of his size and weight. Our old shellback is now getting together

his papers so that he can spend his declining years at Sailors' Snug Harbor, and if he is admitted, he will be a welcome addition to the tall story club over there, for he can spin yarns about seagoing horses that will turn the old salts green with envy.

Looking through an old marine book in the Institute's Conrad Library we came across a story of the first elephant ever brought to this country — from Bengal, aboard a vessel of 561 tons, the "America". It is said that the elephant behaved remarkably well during the passage, having been slung securely and raised aboard by a windlass. The animal "accommodated himself to his straightened quarters and hard fare with a patient philosophy worthy of general imitation." He was accompanied by a native Bengali, who made a tour of the United States with him.

## Burial at Sea

A CHILL April wind blew in from the East River when we boarded the Coast Guard cutter, "Tuckahoe" accompanied by a Naval Reserve chaplain, the Rev. H. J. Pearson, from the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, and Mr. G. G. Yule from Cleveland, with Boat-swain F. Canon in command. They carried a small urn in which the remains of Captain Charles Elliott rested. In accordance with the good Captain's dying wish, to be buried at sea, the purpose of this special trip of the cutter was to scatter his ashes upon the waters in simple and solemn rites. The funeral service for Captain Elliott had been held in the beautiful chapel at the Institute, and large numbers of his former shipmates had attended to pay their last respects to their friend.

The cutter was stopped at a spot off Sandy Hook. The chaplain's pennant was raised to the peak and in a brief ceremony the ashes of Captain Elliott were strewn on the waters, as the chaplain read, in accordance with the age-old custom of the sea:

"Unto Almighty God we commend the soul of our brother departed, and we commit his ashes to the deep, in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection unto eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose coming in glorious majesty to judge the world, the sea shall give up her dead . . ."

Another burial service at sea for a seaman took place aboard the S.S. President Roosevelt recently. The body of Clifford Carson Clark was consigned to the deep with fitting ceremony, and a wreath the gift of an Institute friend and ship lover,

Mrs. Josephine Hantzschman, was cast upon the waves in Latitude 41 degrees-12' N. Longitude 58 degrees 45' W. Captain William B. Oakley officiated, reading the same committal service as used by Chaplain Pearson. Clark had once been an engineer aboard the U. S. liner Leviathan in the days when that vessel was the pride of America's merchant marine. Even after the big ship was tied up to a pier in Hoboken, Clark held his job as a member of the crew that manned the vessel during the lay-up. But watching the vessel slowly rusting into a hulk in the murky waters of Jersey — while other liners sailed proudly by — preyed on his mind. One day he turned on the gas in his little room ashore and left a note asking that his body be returned to the sea he loved. He also requested

that Tennyson's poem, "Crossing the Bar" be read at the burial services:

"Sunset and evening star  
And one clear call for me  
And may there be no moaning of  
the bar  
When I put out to sea."

The chaplains from the Seamen's Church Institute who visit sick and injured seamen in the Marine Hospitals on Staten and Ellis Islands are often asked by dying seamen to have certain hymns sung and certain prayers said at their funeral services, and whenever possible, their wishes are carried out in all details. Many are buried in the Institute's large plot in Cedar Grove Cemetery, Flushing, a special fund caring for the expense when necessary, thus saving them from the ignominy of burial in Potter's Field. The Chaplain then writes a letter to the relatives describing the service.

## The Cruise of the Conrad

"THE sea has been for me a hallowed ground," wrote Joseph Conrad not long before he died. And Alan Villiers, who sailed a square rigged ship, the "Joseph Conrad" 60,000 miles around the world in 1935 and 1936, feels the same devotion for the sea as the great sea writer for whom he named his ship.

His new book, "The Cruise of the Conrad" (Scribner's \$3.75) describes this voyage with so much power and vividness that the landsman reader shares each exciting experience vicariously. Such is the skill of his lucid prose that one never feels sure the ship will survive some of the terrifying ordeals he describes—and yet the book itself is evidence enough that — somehow — by the grace of God, good seamanship and the stout construction of the little vessel

—he and his crew did pull through.

In 1934, he saw the 100 foot, 212 ton, "Georg Stage," an old Danish training ship, fell in love with her at first sight, bought her, renamed her, and, after many financial difficulties, finally managed to start the voyage. The trip from Ipswich, England to New York was successful, but while anchored off Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, a severe storm washed the ship ashore, causing considerable damage. Finally the vessel was repaired, and the voyage continued, by way of Rio. Carrying with him a Scandinavian crew trained in grain-race ships, and with a group of cadets ranging in age from 12 to 16, Villiers undertook to sail the "Joseph Conrad" the hard way, north about, from Singapore to Sydney. Thrown off her course, in the East Indies, north of Papua, the ship had to beat





Photo by Paul Parker

Distinguished Guests at the Old Sea Dogs' Luncheon Given at the Institute in honor of Alan Villiers.

Left to right; beginning in rear: Harry Forsyth, Richard McKay, Frank Frasier, Christopher Morley, Captain Felix Riesenber, Rev. Harold H. Kelley, Captain Alan Villiers, Robert Wilder, Dr. Hendrik W. Van Loon, Richard L. Simon, Gordon Grant, Captain Robert Huntington, Captain Alfred O. Morasso, Bruce Rogers and Rear Admiral Reginald R. Belknap.

back hundreds of miles, to and fro. Many other hardships and vicissitudes beset her, but Villiers and his crew kept on, through the China Sea, the Sulu Sea, the Sea of Celebes, the Solomon Islands, the Louisiades, Tahiti. The Coral Sea reefs caught the ship, but she did not break up; a hurricane off Cape Horn cost her a mast—all of which make the book exciting reading. More than sixty of the author's superb photographs illustrate the book. No listing of places or incidents can adequately give the flavor of this unusual document — the "swan song of sail"—the author intended it to be, but let us hope that he may be able to find another sturdy windjammer in which he may undertake more adventurous voyages and return to write more lively chronicles of life under sail. Joseph Conrad once wrote, when

referring to his experience as chief mate in the "Torrens": "A passage under sail brings out in the course of days whatever there may be of sea love and sea sense in any individual whose soul is not indissolubly wedded to the pedestrian shore," and it is to be hoped that boys who yearn to go to sea may still find an opportunity to serve in sailing ships before the last ship has vanished.

On May 1st, at the Hecksher Theatre, Captain Villiers very graciously showed the moving pictures which he had taken on the voyage of the "Joseph Conrad" and told of his adventures for the benefit of the Institute. We are happy to report that the proceeds were most gratifying and we trust that all of our friends who saw the pictures and heard the lecture enjoyed the experience.

## Marlinespike Seamanship

COUNT among the lost arts that of Marlinespike Seamanship. Talk to any seaman today on South Street who is the proud holder of an A.B. certificate, and he will tell you that he can make a short splice, an eye splice, and a long splice, a bowline, a clove hitch, a reef knot, a rolling hitch and a double becket bend, but if you showed him the Bluejacket's Manual wherein the test for Marlinespike Seamanship is given, he would shake his head and say, "All that stuff's not necessary any more. Those knots aren't required today by the steamboat inspectors giving the examinations."

Time was when a seafarer prided himself on this very test. A marlinespike, by the way, is an iron tool, like a spike, for separating the strands of a rope. Captain Robert Huntington, over at the Merchant Marine School of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, which prepares seamen for their A.B. examinations, says that it would be fine for seamen to know the 17 knots required in the Marlinespike Seamanship test but that they would have very little occasion to practice some of them. The Captain, of course, as an old shell-back and deep-water salt, knows all these knots, but there are not many old-timers left who can claim this accomplishment.

Here is the test: (Try it some long summer's evening).



Make a neat long splice in 3 stranded rope.

Make an eye splice in 2½ inch or smaller wire rope.

Prepare and serve wire rope.

Reeve off a double purchase.

Make a 3, 4 and 5 stranded turkshead (Note: these were useful on foot ropes to keep the sailor from slipping from the top of the mast.)

Make a double Mathew Walker, and a man rope knot.

Mouse a hook correctly.

Make a single and double carrick bend.

Rig a parbuckle.

Make a wire grommet.

Strap a block.

Make a chain and four stranded eye splice.

Put on a racking seizing.

Rig a strap and toggle.

Make a wire eye splice.

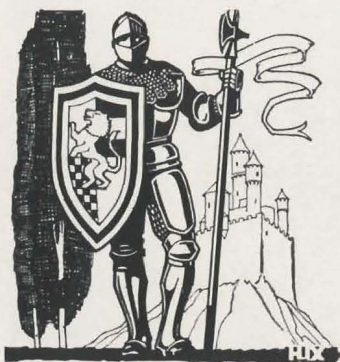
Make a shroud knot.

Cross point a part of rail, stanchion or piece of rope.

## Maritime Day

In accordance with the President's proclamation, Maritime Day will be observed throughout the United States on May 22nd. On May 23rd, the Institute will hold a special Sunday evening service to commemorate the first successful transoceanic voyage by steam on May 22, 1819, of the "Savannah" with Captain Moses Rogers in command and Captain Stevens Rogers sailing master. Readers of THE LOOKOUT and their friends are most cordially invited to the service, to be held in the Chapel of Our Saviour, at 7:45 P. M. No card of admission is required. The Rev. Henry Darlington, D.D., Rector of the Church of the Heavenly Rest, will preach, and the Rev. Harold H. Kelley, Superintendent of the Institute, will officiate. The organist and vested choir of Randall Memorial Church, Sailors' Snug Harbor, will provide special music.





## Will You Be A "Crews-Aider"?\*

THIS year, with the clouds of depression receding on the horizon, and with incomes and dividends showing some recovery, we have set ourselves the task of *increasing* our services to the men of the sea.

We hope that our friends have personally benefited from the improved times, and we want to express our profound gratitude for their ready and generous response to our calls for help during the long, lean years of the business and shipping slump. Without your encouragement and loyalty we could never have brought to fruition many of our plans and programs in behalf of the seafarers whom we are privileged to serve.

We realize that many of you continued your contributions at great personal sacrifice and this sharing spirit has been heartily appreciated by the seamen, the Institute staff and the Board of Managers. It is your thoughtful way of paying tribute to the men who, through wind and gale and storm and calm, fulfill their appointed tasks—carrying passengers and cargoes in safety across the oceans.

And now we present our needs and our plans for the future. We have come a long way from the boarding house day with its problems of crimping and shanghaiing, but the course ahead is still beset with rocks and shoals.

More than ever before we realize that the seafarer needs improved educational and recreational opportunities. We feel that the Institute can be an important factor, greater than ever, in fashioning a better American merchant marine worthy of our Yankee clipper-ship traditions when this country's supremacy on the high seas was undisputed.

## Haven for Shipwrecked Crews

THE crews of two freighters, stricken by winter gales in the Atlantic, were rescued and brought to the Institute. From March 27th to April 3rd ten members of the crew of the Norwegian freighter, "Aristo," enjoyed the hospitality of 25 South Street, and from April 1st to 3rd ten members of the crew of the freighter, "Bjerkli" were cared for here, at the request of the Consulate General of Norway, until they could be sent home.

The "Aristo" ran aground in a heavy fog and sank in Hamilton harbor, Bermuda (forcing the crew to abandon ship). Salvage tugs worked her off the rocks, but the vessel filled rapidly and sank on March 16th. They were cared for

in Bermuda by the Missions to Seamen branch there and brought to New York on the Furness liner, "Monarch of Bermuda."

The "Bjerkli" was wrecked in a storm off the coast of Nova Scotia. The ship drifted for ten days, helpless, when her amateur wireless signals were traced by the U. S. Coast Guard cutter "Chelan." After all the members of the crew had been taken safely off the doomed ship, she sank. The crew were landed in Boston and then brought to New York by train.

In addition to food and shelter, the Institute provided warm clothing, shoes, cigarettes, and other items which the men greatly appreciated.

Won't you — when your annual contribution to the Institute comes due — consider the possibility of *increasing* your regular gift to \$100.00—and thus become a "Crews-Aider"? We hope you will accept this friendly challenge. With your help we can wage a successful crusade in behalf of the men of the merchant marine.

\* A "Crews-Aider" is a contributor of \$100.

Kindly send contributions to the  
SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK  
25 South Street, New York, N. Y.



# Mark Twain of the Waterfront

By Victor Weingarten\*

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Captain Tayleur instructs some youthful students in the art of ship-modelling

modern vessel but once and I was glad to get off that one," he said.

"All of my sailing has been done on rigged vessels and in those days there wasn't a sailor who didn't have some hobby relating to the sea. Nowadays, with modern ships and short stays in port, sailors are losing the technique and inclination to build things like boats," he said.

Recently the captain visited the Social Security Board on behalf of American seamen, asking that the present security laws be amended to apply to sailors. He also asked that they receive unemployment benefits and that the Federal Government supervise hiring

halls, with American ships being obliged to hire American seamen.

His three shipwrecks occurred in 1880, 1904 and 1910, with the second being the worst of the lot, he said.

## Saved in Shipwreck

Caught in a storm caused by a volcanic eruption off Angee Point in the Straits of Lombardy near Java, the vessel was smashed to bits, killing the captain, the captain's wife and child and 14 sailors. The remainder of the crew, of which he was the first mate, were saved by a sailor who swam ashore with a line fastened to a breaches buoy and drew them all to safety.

## The Sea's Romance

Dedicated to Alan Villiers

Down to the sea in ships, has oft been sung by men  
Down where the long wave slips, from peak to rounded stem.  
The romance of cloud, and wind-swept sea, of red hot sun, or a homeward lee.  
The flick of the wing of a wild sea hen, the haul Ho chant of homebound men.  
The grace and beauty of wind-filled sail, and the steady rush of the ice-cold hail.  
Of the battling trip back round The Horn, with bulging holds of swelling corn.  
The beat of sleet in wind-lined face, as strong arms haul on ice-caked brace.  
The lonely stand on the cold forepeak, is naught for the strong, but, not for the weak.  
The rust brown sides of weathered steel as she glides along with a seaman's reel.  
The glistening eye of a toughened tar. When the watch sings out as they near the bar.  
One great joy of a sailor's life, is in meeting again, a faithful wife  
And too he's glad, when the anchor's weighed and the start of another voyage is made  
For the call of the sea is strong indeed, in the souls of the men of the sailor breed.

By GEORGE DORMAN

## 25 South Street

By Captain Felix Riesenberg\*

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### Book Review

#### "LIVING AGAIN"

By Captain Felix Riesenberg

Doubleday, Doran & Co. \$3.00

Captain Riesenberg, whose list of sea books includes "Under Sail", "Mother Sea", "The Left-Handed Passenger" and "Log of the Sea", stands as a human link between the sailing ships of the past and the steamships of today. He has seen service under both, and in his latest book he relates his experiences as sailor, engineer, captain, editor and novelist. His early life on the New York Nautical Schoolship, the St. Mary, is told in a vivid way; the harsh treatment of the young cadets was a practical way of fitting them for the rigors of a seagoing life: "Those who remained on board for two years," he writes, "were a seasoned lot, and a considerable percentage of them went to sea, rising to positions of responsible command."

However hard the discipline, he remembers his schoolship days with affection. After his graduation he made a voyage in sail around the Horn and then served as a cadet in a steamship. "The Stokehold," he writes, recalling still the horror

of it, "where huge Scotch boilers were fired by hand, was a veritable hell." Firemen went insane or jumped overboard. Riesenberg is always concerned with the welfare of his shipmates and his restless imagination is stirred by some of the needless suffering. After an adventurous trip to the Far East, he joined Walter Wellman in a balloon flight to the Arctic, an experience which might have been disastrous, but kind Fate protected him. On returning to New York, he went to Columbia and studied engineering, and then worked on an aqueduct, patented inventions, married, and finally was called back to sea in command of the U. S. training ship, Newport. How the Newport sailed across the Atlantic in the wake of a hurricane, under canvas, makes a most exciting sea yarn which all ship lovers will relish. There are also revealing pictures of literary friends, particularly Christopher Morley.

One of the most popular of Riesenberg's books, used constantly by seamen in the Institute's Conrad Library, is "Standard Seamanship for the Merchant Service".

M. D. C.



## Book Reviews

### "COAST GUARD TO THE RESCUE"

Illus. with Official Photographs  
N. Y. Farrar and Rinehart. \$2.50

The author of "S O S to the Rescue", a radio operator still on active duty, has given us another excellent book, full of information and incident and written with authority.

The United States Coast Guard was officially established as such in 1915, to include the old Revenue and Life Saving Services. To the history of these two services, details of the various Humane societies in which the Life Saving Society had its origin, the story of one Captain Joshua James and his exploits, are given several valuable chapters. Further interesting data is written about the beginnings of the life-saving services in Europe and Asia. Modern wonder tales of the Atlantic Ice Patrol, the Flying Lifeboats and the lives they have saved, the Seal Patrol in the Pacific, all make fascinating reading. Recommended to any one who is interested in things of the sea as a splendid account of one of our greatest public services.

A. W. C.

### "EIGHT MONTHS IN ARCTIC ALASKA AND SIBERIA WITH THE ARCTIC WHALEMEN"

By Herbert L. Aldrich.

Reprinted 1937.

Reynolds Printing, New Bedford. 50 cents

In 1887 Mr. Aldrich had the rare privilege of spending eight months in the Arctic and seeing at first hand life in the whaling fleet and among the native villages of Alaska and Siberia. His keen observations have been carefully recorded for us in an unusually detailed account. The reader gets at once a sense of the "fraternity" of whaling-men from the glimpses into the custom of "gaming"—visiting aboard each other's ships; a feeling of the remoteness of this life from any other reality; a vivid picture of the natives, their distinguishing characteristics and strange social customs. In the concluding chapter are a number of stories told by several of the "skippers" with whom the author sailed. One feels throughout the narrative that the writer achieved a degree of intimacy with his surroundings, and that he writes with authority. There are some excellent photographs taken by the author and part of a collection now in the New Bedford Whaling Museum.

A. W. C.

*A Vacation Hint to Sea Voyagers: A Thank Offering to Seamen, for Safe Arrival.*

### THE SEA MADE MEN:

The Story of a Gloucester Lad

Presented by Roger W. Babson.

Edited by Elizabeth L. Alling. \$2.50

New York: Fleming H. Revell Company

"In the olden days . . . the great universities of America were not Harvard and Yale, but rather the cornfield and the sailing ship. The farm and the sea were the real training grounds which developed industry, perseverance, integrity, and those fundamental traits which made America." With this foreword Mr. Babson launches his great-uncle Gorham P. Low's log of twenty years at sea. Captain Low speaks with a voice that is clear, straightforward, and authentic. The language in which he tells of the daily commonplaces, and the not rare danger-charged moments, of the seafaring business is plain and modest in the extreme; yet the self-cultured writer unconsciously shows himself a man who saw beneath the surface of things, men, and manners.

Perhaps most interesting to this reader are Captain Low's details of the business side of his calling. A merchant ship master in his day was frequently part owner of one or more ships, or—except in the occasional presence on a voyage of a supercargo—was the actual business representative of a company of merchants. Thus the master had the most immediate personal concern with the conduct of trading, the business of making money. He put to sea with his Bowditch in one hand and his ledgers in the other. Captain Low is the first chronicler to give me such a close view of the counting-house; add a measure of the fo'c's'le, a great deal of the cabin,—and you have a most readable and valuable sea journal. D. G. K.

### "DOWN THE DOCK"

By John Cabbage.

Parnassus Press. \$1.25

The name he got from his Dutch parents was Jon Keppes, but when he came to America he substituted the nearest equivalent, Cabbage. He is the sailor poet whose previous volume, "Eight Bells" was reviewed in "The Lookout" several years ago. Cabbage finds material for philosophical reflection in the garbage scows on which he works for the New York City Department of Street Cleaning. To some the spectacle of ashes, rotten food, worn-out clothes, dead pets, empty bottles would be revolting, but Cabbage finds it full of romance. This "poet of the dumps" gives colorful glimpses of an odd phase of sea life. M. D. C.



Photo by P. L. Sperr

A View of the Institute from the East River Waterfront.

## SUMMARY OF SERVICES RENDERED TO MERCHANT SEAMEN BY THE SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

FROM JANUARY 1st TO APRIL 1st, 1937

65,889	Lodgings (including relief beds).
21,907	Pieces of Baggage handled.
156,523	Sales at Luncheonette and Restaurant.
71,112	Sales at News Stand.
4,488	Patronized Barber, Tailor and Laundry.
3,672	Attended 160 Religious Services at Institute and U. S. Marine Hospitals.
481	Cadets and Seamen attended 89 Lectures in Merchant Marine School; 13 new students enrolled.
22,866	Social Service Interviews.
5,454	Relief Loans.
2,359	Individual Seamen received Relief.
13,979	Books and magazines distributed.
1,304	Pieces of clothing, and 472 Knitted Articles distributed.
466	Treated in Dental, Eye, Ear-Nose-Throat & Medical Clinics.
40,215	Attended 52 entertainments, moving pictures, athletic activities, concerts and lectures.
1,034	Attendance in Apprentices' Room.
85	Missing Seamen found.
498	Positions secured for Seamen.
\$38,622	Deposited for 585 Seamen in Banks; \$4,424 transmitted to families.
4,463	Attendance in Joseph Conrad Library.
2,705	Telephone Contacts with Seamen.



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