

seeing eye can fail to notice her and those points that make her to be observed.

The trim little craft is surely typical of a life picture to be seen by any noticing spectator of human life, in the busy streets of a great city every day. Such a man, perhaps, has been taught no profession or trade that would save him in his misfortune. Perhaps he has been well off and had no idea that he would ever have to struggle in a way all unknown to him and yet he does well what his hand finds to do. And through it all, wherever he goes and whatever may be his surroundings, he manages always to keep a smartness and a touch of his former life, that marks him out just as do the white-tipped masts, the hulk that has seen better days while sailing the seas of the world.

Two excellent pictures of this once smart 773 ton clipper are in the possession of the owner, Captain S. Holm, one a very nice pencil sketch, the other a photograph. In her sailing days the Forest Holm, rechristened the Holmwood, was sailed by the Captain across the Tasman. With her close rig and consequent expanse of canvas, she proved to have a remarkable turn of speed. The pictures seem to indicate that the owner still has a tender spot in his heart for the trim-built schooner. Every sea captain looks with such a feeling on the boat that was once his floating home.

A SAILOR CAT.

Every ship carries a mascot of some kind, some animal adopted by the crew. But it is rare to find a cat which made itself to be taken on board a vessel that traded from Norway to one of the English ports.

This little animal had a flair for swimming, most unusual in a cat, and it used to really enjoy this exercise. It would go out to follow the ferry from a North of England port. Its large paws gave it quite a turn of speed which enabled it to keep up with the little boat on a river cruise. Curiously, too, it would prefer water to milk for drinking.

At length the cat seemed to make up its mind to go to sea, for it made friends with some Norwegian sailors. They became quite fond of it and when they left port, the cat went with them and was duly adopted, becoming the mascot of their brig and sailing with them wherever their business took them. It became truly a nautical animal and was never so happy as when the ship was "in for a blow" out on the ocean.

Recently I came across another "feline" story that may be of interest. It records a really remarkable happening and its central figure is a cat that adopted an ocean-going steamer. There is also another instance of the sailor's superstition.

A little jet black cat wandered up the gangway of the steamer, while lying at the wharf in a New Zealand port and seemed so happy in its new surroundings that the crew accepted it and nicknamed it "Coal-black." The little cat settled down to seafaring, and when a port was reached, it would go ashore, returning before the vessel sailed.

But on one occasion, when the ship left port no trace could be found of the mascot and the sailors said at once something would happen, and sure enough it did.

Two days out, the vessel ran into a big blow and one of the crew who looked after the cat was washed overboard. A huge green sea came over and before he could save himself, he found himself in the ocean. He was unable to see any trace of the ship, owing to the storm and the partial darkness.

Realising the futility of trying to swim, he merely kept himself afloat and waited for dawn. When this came, he seemed destined to come to a watery end, but just when hope appeared lost, he saw near him a lifeboat which evidently had been washed overboard at the same time as he himself.

He swam to it, unlaced the canvas which still covered it and, after a struggle, succeeded in pulling himself into the boat. There he saw, lying on a coat left by one of the crew, the little black cat and three kittens, "snug as a bug in a rug."

It was an amazing coincidence and seemed to uphold the sailor's belief in superstition and luck. He firmly believed that fate had taken a hand in his life.

Shortly after a ship hove in sight and took the whaleboat and its crew on board. The story was soon told and the little black family were well cared for and in course of time restored to their own ship. Belief in superstition and fate was much strengthened by this very remarkable happening.

THE LOOKOUT MAN.

A DAUGHTER OF THE SEA.

Last month saw the centenary of the great feat, now historic, of seamanship, when Grace Darling made one of the most gallant rescues recorded in the history of the sea. Special celebrations were held in Edinburgh, England, the birthplace of the heroine.

On a stormy night in 1838 the ship *Forfarshire*, bound from Hull to Dunedee was cast on the big Harker rocks off the precipitous coast of Northumberland. Sixty-three persons, including women and children, were on board. Mountainous seas carried the vessel on to the rocks where she broke in two. The aft portion was carried away, but the forepart remained wedged on the rock and the survivors being in a perilous position until the morning.

When day broke they were observed from the Longstone lighthouse where Grace Darling, daughter of the keeper, was watching. In spite of the terrific sea running, she and her father managed to launch their boat and, after superhuman efforts, they rescued nine of the survivors. It was a feat almost unparalleled in the annals of the sea and has rightly been handed down to posterity so the name "Grace Darling" is known all over the world.

A tablet has been fixed on the wall of the room in

which she used to sleep and a museum has been erected at Bamburgh, close to the cottage where she was born. This contains the little boat that figured in the rescue and various other relics of the brave girl, including a fine oil painting Brooks, which depicts, with realistic effect, the struggle against the elements.

The lighthouse, so long her home, still flashes its light of warning to mariners sailing on that treacherous coast. It serves to help to keep alive the memory of the girl and her brave deed, and this is a real inspiration to men who "go down to the sea in ships and do their business in great waters."

BY THE LOOKOUT MAN.

SUPERSTITION AMONG MARINERS.

A TALE OF THE NAVY.

Sailors are proverbially credited with a profound belief in superstition. There have been many stories told of this and perhaps the best known will be that of the "Ancient Mariner," who shot the albatross and the dreadful fate that overtook the ship and the crew.

One story I came across recently tells of a tragic happened aboard a British warship and the tale of the man—he was the ship's cook—who committed a deed that to men of the sea is unforgivable.

A monkey, which was the foksle pet and ship's mascot, developed some bad habits and the skipper told the cook he had better get rid of it. His intention was that the little animal should be given away, perhaps to a circus, but the unlucky cook did worse and threw it overboard. When this was known all felt something would happen—and it did.

Shortly after the vessel was out at sea taking part in manoeuvres, under war conditions. She was steaming at full speed in pitchy darkness when she was involved in a head-on collision with a sister ship. Both were terribly damaged and only the bulkheads kept them afloat. They limped home to their base which they safely reached.

There was, it is stated, only one casualty, and by a strange freak of fate, the cook was reported missing. Just what happened will never be known. The fact remains that the man who did the deed which struck the sailors with horror, was the one who suffered. How this happened will never be known, but his number went out and no one aboard was surprised.

—Signalling the Lookout Man.

SPIRIT OF CAMARADERIE.

It is amongst the people in lowly station in life that one sees most kindness. This is borne out by all who

have had experience amongst them. So it is in the lower decks, amongst the bluejackets, the stokers and the firemen, there exists a remarkable camaraderie. Cases are on record where a pal has passed in his number and at once there has been a general desire to help his family. His effects have been put up for sale and as each article was knocked down to a bidder, it was at once put up again, the bidder giving an order on his pay. And so it went on, a kind of Dutch auction that was very popular during the war in raising funds for any charitable purpose. It is amazing how the amounts totalled up, to the benefit of the 'legatee.' People generally might well take a lesson from this story. There is such scope for doing kindly deeds—so often a want of the will to do them. The world would be a happier place were the spirit of the Navy's lower decks more general.

—The Lookout Man.

A Hundred Years of the P. & O.

(From the P.L.A. Monthly, October 1937).

In view of the recent visits of the P. and O. tourist ships to New Zealand, the following article should be of interest to members:—

The story of the P. & O.—a name now as familiar as the word "Peninsular" in the early nineteenth century—is more than a mere chapter in the romantic history of British shipping. It is synonymous almost with the last hundred years of that history, with the development of steam from the wooden paddle-steamer to the modern ship of to-day. The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, which celebrated its centenary in September, has built up a tradition of enterprise and efficiency second to none. The romance of the growth of this company is coloured by the daring and vision as well as the tenacity and hard work of its leaders. Faced again and again with defeat and possible ruin, the path they chose was never one of easy compromise but of courageous decision to which, once made, they devoted all their energy. Luckily for the progress of our overseas communications to-day, their daring was justified, and through many vicissitudes the P. & O. has lived to celebrate its centenary and enter upon a second hundred years with enhanced prestige.

The undertaking's association with London began even prior to the formation of the Peninsular Steam Navigation Company in 1837 by Messrs. Wilcox and Anderson. Already in 1835 these two young shipping agents were firmly established as managers or charterers of steamships running between the British Isles and Spain and Portugal. Their early success was due partly to their luck in a win-all or lose-all policy of active support first for the Queen of Portugal and later for the Queen of Spain. In both cases they backed the winning side and their services were not forgotten. But even in times of peace the two managers pursued a bold policy of trying to create trade by maintaining regular seamanship services far in excess of the demand, believing as they

did that trade would flourish as long as the means of communication were there. Although sound in the long run, these tactics nearly ruined Wilcox and Anderson, who were then operating between London and Falmouth and the ports of Spain and Portugal with six "large and powerful" steamers, and the Government mail contract came just at the right time. The story of how the two men persevered to get this contract to carry mails to Spain by steamship after their proposal had been turned down flat by the Admiralty, which at that time operated the Post Office mail packets, is but one instance of their extraordinary pertinacity.

Finally, the contract was formally signed, and in September, 1837, the first sailings of the official Peninsular Steam Navigation Company were advertised, the *Don Juan*, 933 tons, and the *Tagus*, 900 tons, being the biggest vessels of the company.

Until 1840 the Peninsular Company only carried the mails as far as Gibraltar, but this contract was then extended to Egypt, and out of it came:—

"The Incorporation by Charter of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, and an extension which in two years reached out to India, included a development unheard of in steamship companies of a difficult and complicated overland route as part of their system, and within five years had branched out into lines to Italy, Greece and the Black Sea, and regular running to Ceylon, Madras, Calcutta and China."

In face of several complete failures to establish a regular steamship service between England and India by the shorter Red Sea route avoiding the long passage round the Cape of Good Hope with no vessels suited to the task, and overwhelming odds against it, the P. & O. succeeded where it seemed almost humanly impossible. To mention only one of the obstacles with which a steamship company operating to the Far East had to contend in the 1840's—Every ounce of coal had to be taken out from England, and when the "*Hindustan*," the company's largest vessel built specially for the India service, went out on her maiden trip, sailing ships with supplies of bunkering coal had to be sent off in advance.

The transport of passengers and mails from Alexandria to Suez was primitive in the extreme prior to the advent of the P. & O. Heat, disease, vermin, bad food and dirt were a few of the discomforts suffered on the tedious journey by barge from Alexandria through the Mahmoudieh Canal up the Nile in another vessel to Cairo, and thence across the desert to Suez. The P. & O. spent large sums on improving this overland part of the journey which was reorganised with great thoroughness. The old vermin-infested wooden barges drawn by horses were replaced by iron steamers, hotels were built at the termini, and rest houses in charge of Europeans were put up on the desert route.

The following years saw a steady extension of the company's range. A service from Ceylon to Penang, Singapore and China was started and after a big struggle with vested interests, mainly those of the East India Company, the P. & O. managed to secure the Bombay-Suez service; and at last the long-due steamship connection with Australia was opened in 1852.

Round about the middle of the century the com-

pany was badly hit by a 50 per cent. rise in the price of coal after a big rebuilding programme had been put in hand. Matters became crucial in 1854, when the demand for freight tonnage to the Crimea made the cost of coal transport to the Far East exorbitant. The Australian service was discontinued, and after the end of the Crimean War, when the contract was put up for tender again and another company, the European and Australian Royal Mail, secured it, there were not a few pessimists who prophesied the extinction of the P. & O. However, the rival company failed dismally, and the Australian mail contract returned to the P. & O. After a few years of prosperity, the company's existence was threatened by the Suez Canal, which was finished in 1869. Not only had the P. & O. invested a great deal of capital in the overland route, but the opening of the Canal encouraged the quick growth of a number of rival companies starting with new vessels.

The two founders, Wilcox and Anderson, were by this time dead, but the company had the good fortune to have as their successor Mr. (later Sir) Thomas Sutherland, under whose able and resourceful leadership many serious obstacles were surmounted. Instead of attempting to convert the existing fleet, the company decided to build new ships which would make the through journey from England to India via the Suez Canal. This decision was justified by the preference given to P. & O. vessels even in keen competition with other lines. In the subsequent crisis with the Suez Canal Company it was Sutherland who represented the whole British shipping industry and finally obtained the victory which benefited not only his own company but the industry generally, the terms being practically the same as those under which the Canal is run to-day.

It is not possible to deal here at length with the evolution of the P. & O. fleet from the paddle-steamer *William Fawcett* of 206 tons to the *S.S. Strathmore* of 23,428 tons. In the old days the P. & O. boasted the biggest ships in the world, and although for a time limitations were imposed by the depth of the Suez Canal, this has been so improved by dredging that 23,000 ton vessels can now use the waterway regularly.

During the nineteenth century several of the P. & O. fleet, including *Iberia*, *Pottinger*, *Pera* and *Ceylon*, were built on the Thames, and to-day its ships continue to be familiar visitors to the Port. The crack vessels of the P. & O. have always been up to the highest standard of their time, and the present big building programme, valued at about £4,500,000, which the P. and O. and its associated companies have in hand will guarantee the continuance of this policy.

Sir Thomas Sutherland resigned in 1914 and his successor, Lord Inchape, further enlarged the scope of the undertaking so that the P. & O. with its large group of associated companies to-day provides an unparalleled network of communications to the East. The present chairman, Lord Craigmyle, is continuing in the tradition of energetic and progressive management which has gained for the P. & O. its high reputation throughout a century.

To commemorate its centenary the Peninsular and

Oriental Steam Navigation Company has published "A Hundred Year History of the P. & O., 1837-1937," by Boyd Cable (Ivor Nicholson & Watson: 10s. 6d.) containing illustrations of its fleet past and present. The above facts have been culled from this complete and interesting record.—Editor.

The Treasure that Lies under the Sea

This year, if wind and current are kind, the treasure of the torpedoed *Lusitania* will see the daylight after nearly a generation of darkness, writes A. P. Luscombe Whyte, in "Nash's Magazine."

Up till recently salvage has been largely cornered by the Italians and Germans, but the salvage ship *Ophit*, which has located the sunken *Lusitania*, belongs to a British syndicate which also owns the rights in 500 known wrecks and a score of diving inventions. Success in this instance will mean the launching of a new British industry in which the gains are counted in tens of millions.

The wealth of the ocean bed is inestimable. Some say that the gold, silver, and jewels which may be raised are worth £1,000,000,000.

In Vigo Bay lie the rotting hulks of the greatest of all Spanish "plate fleets," sunk in harbour by a British admiral after its return from Vera Cruz. Of the £24,000,000 in treasure which it holds, little has yet been recovered.

A plundering Turkish fleet, fat with filched Grecian treasures, rests below the still waters of Navarino Bay, sunk over a century ago by the Allied fleets.

Table Bay is the graveyard of more than thirty ships from centuries-old Dutch merchantmen to modern tramps; a graveyard worth £20,000,000.

Off the Venezuelan coasts rots the great *San Pedro* with £13,000,000 aboard. Near the Lizard £4,000,000 waits in another galleon.

The treasures of the old galleons are free for any daring man to take. He can locate them with modern echo-sounding and root down into their sandy graves with pumps that can handle 1000 tons every hour. Even simpler will be the looting of the many modern bullion-carrying ships, though the profits will probably be less. For international law compels the salvage man to divide his spoils with the underwriters who paid up on the wreck and to whom it legally belongs.

It was the discovery a few years ago of the "Iron Man" suit which brought thousands of sunken ships within reach of salvage. The familiar rubber dress was limited to an extreme depth of 300ft, and, even at 200ft or 150ft, work was severely limited in time and scope. There was a one-word reason for this—pressure. For every 32ft the diver descends, the pressure on every inch of his body increases by 15 pounds, so that at a

normal working depth of 100ft he is supporting a total weight of 45 tons. Only the corresponding pressure of the air, forced down to him from above, holds back the water from crushing him to a shapeless pulp. While his air pressure is maintained all is well. But . . .

Deep-sea salvage with the rubber suit is always slow, and often dangerous. But the "Iron Man"—a modified version of which is being used for the *Lusitania* job—has taken most of the delay and danger out of diving. It protects the diver from the sea by its own brute strength so that no air pressure is needed and an ordinary man can work at great depths for hours on end. It is, in effect, a one-man submarine of strong steel and alloy which completely encases the diver. A barrel-shaped cylinder protects the trunk, and smaller cylinders contain the arms and legs. Immensely strong joints give him considerable liberty of movement, and artificial steel hands—claws worked from inside the suit—are accurate enough to tie a knot in a rope or pick up a coin.

With such a suit a diver can work easily at 500ft or even lower. Tests, without human contents, show that the "Iron Man" can go safely down to 1400 feet where the total pressure is about 600 tons.

But, owing to the bulk of his suit, the "Iron Man" diver cannot enter sunken ships in search of treasure. He can lay explosives to blow a way down through the decks, and direct by telephone the great wrecking grabs which come plunging down past his head from the salvage ship above. His job is to direct the pulling apart of the ship and the fishing for its contents.

Next to the problem of pressure, location has always been the salvageman's greatest difficulty. This difficulty has been largely solved by an ingenious gadget, the echosounder, which has now replaced "swinging the lead" in most modern ships.

The *Ophit* picked up the *Lusitania* on the last day of the season, when the search was about to be abandoned for the year. She was steaming slowly over the last buoyed section when suddenly the man at the sounder shouted, "We've got her, boys!" The crew gathered in tense silence as the pen traced out the shape of a giant hillock below. Nine times they traversed the same course. Each time that significant mount appeared—about 800ft long and standing up over 80ft from the bottom. The last time the *Ophit* was buoyed directly over it, and a diver went down. "You should hit her hull at 260 feet," they told him.

So accurate was the sounder that as the cable passed the 260ft mark, the diver's voice came up the phone, "I'm on her hull now."

It is yet too early to say whether the search for the gold will be short or prolonged. Six seasons of intensive work passed before naval divers succeeded in removing the last of the £5,000,000 in the torpedoed *Laurentic*. Each time the divers laboriously blasted their way to the strong room, gales sprang up and forced them to port. Each time they returned they found hundreds of steel plates folded over the treasure. But though work was possible for only six months a year, and each diver could do only two 15 minute spells a day, the *Laurentic's* gold was recovered at a cost of no more than 2½ per cent.

The Merchant Service

BRITISH DECLINE.

CONCERN IN NAVY LEAGUE.

(From "The Post's" Representative.)

LONDON, June 29.

"This has been one of the most remarkable years for the Navy League in immediate progress throughout the country and the Empire," said Lord Lloyd at the league's annual meeting this week. He was re-elected president, a position he has held since 1930.

Although the league's position was much improved, greater resources were needed than ever before. The Government was at last re-arming tardily and expensively—it would have proved less expensive if the League's advice had been taken—but the progress of naval re-armament had not in the least reduced the need for the work and propaganda of the League.

"We have had, and it is our policy to maintain, the closest and friendly relations with the Admiralty, and those relations have never been better than to-day," Lord Lloyd continued. "We have steadily refused to take upon ourselves duties it was not within our competence to perform. It is our duty to fasten the attention of the public on things its attention should be directed to. At present the disruption of our merchant navy is a thing to which all our energies and the country's attention must be directed, because the position is extremely grave.

"Our resources in passenger and cargo vessels are steadily dwindling, while those of our greatest competitors are increasing. So far there is no indication that the Government or the public really appreciates the gravity of the danger.

DRIVEN OFF THE PACIFIC.

"British ships have virtually been driven off the Pacific. Over and over again the Government has promised to give attention to this matter, but nothing has been achieved. We formerly owned 80 per cent. of the

traffic between the Far East and Bombay, and other countries had the remaining 20 per cent. The position now is almost exactly the opposite.

"To add to that, we have been driven entirely out of the Baltic trade. I doubt whether there is one shallow-draught steamer being built for that trade, although it is we who import the timber from Russia and buy more from that country than they buy from us. Also, we have been driven very largely out of our own coastal trade because unlike other countries, we will not protect our own coastal traffic. There has been a most dramatic decline in our fishing fleet. When you remember what the fishing fleet supplied in personnel and intelligence to the Royal Navy during the war you will realise what that means."

DISCIPLINE IN YOUTH TRAINING.

Lord Lloyd said that another of the League's objectives was the development of the Sea Cadet Corps. "We have been," he said, "the only youth movement in the Empire that has insisted from first to last on the necessity of discipline in youth training. We believe that it is useless to train the boys unless you train the mind with the body. We believe that no physical movement is of any value unless it has a spiritual counterpart.

"I do not think there has ever been a more important moment for England to show that its youth can be inspired by the same degree, if not the same kind, of enthusiasm as the great youth movements under totalitarian direction on the Continent.

Referring to the visit to New Zealand of Admiral J. E. T. Harper, Lord Lloyd said that it had changed the "face of things in New Zealand from the defence point of view."

