ne BOAT UNTERS

James B. Connolly

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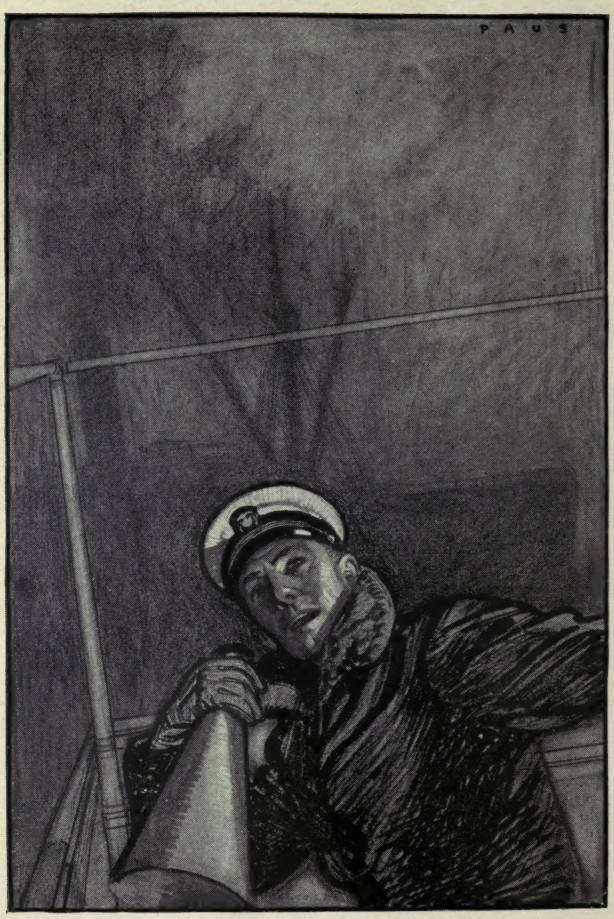


"Where you-all going? . . . Can't you-all see where you're going? Keep off—keep off." [*Page* 117]

THE U-BOAT HUNTERS

BY

JAMES B. CONNOLLY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1918

Published June, 1918

FOREWORD

WHAT a great thing if we could do away with war!

But men are not cast in that mould. We shall continue to have wars; and some day the world is going to have a war to which the present will serve only as a try-out.

When that war comes our country will probably have to bear the burden for the western hemisphere. In that war our navy will be our first line of defense; and what we do for our navy now will have much to do with what our navy will be able to do for us then.

Our navy to-day is made up of good ships and capable, courageous, hard-working officers and men. There are some fuddy-duddies and politicians among them, but most of them are on the job every minute. Their highest hope is the chance to serve their country. The chapters in this book which tell of their U-boat hunting only prove once more their great qualities.

There are chapters in this book which have nothing to do with U-boat hunting, but have much to do with the navy. Such are the two opening chapters and the three closing chapters. The motive of four of those chapters will probably be obvious; the chapter on the workings of a submarine is included in the hope of interesting our young fellows in that type of craft.

The need of such a chapter? Take this illustration of what people do not know about submarines: Three years ago an admiral on the other side was called into conference on the U-boat problem. When it came his turn to speak he said: "Gentlemen, it is child's talk to say that the U-boats will ever amount to anything! Disregard them utterly!" Only three years ago that was, and that naval officer was considered for commander-in-chief of the Grand Fleet! Three years ago, and last year the U-boats sank 6,600,000 tons of shipping!

Right now Germany probably contemplates, or is actually constructing, U-boats with armor and guns heavy enough to engage on the surface any war craft up to the battle-cruiser

class. How far from that to fighting the heaviest of surface craft—even to the battleships?

In the event of invasion—we might as well face that; refusing to think about it certainly will not eliminate the possibility,—in the event of invasion by a powerful foe our first line of defense will be our navy. The navy will always be our first line of defense; and so the need to-day of interesting in our navy young men,—progressive young men, who will learn from the past but prefer to live in the future.

J. B. C.

CONTENTS

NAVY SHIPS

MORE than one-third of our naval force was being reviewed by the President. A most impressive assembly of men-o'-war it was, in tonnage and weight of metal the greatest ever floated by the waters of the western hemisphere.

The last of the fleet had arrived on the night before. From the bluffs along the shore they might have been seen approaching with a mysterious play of lights across the shadowy waters. In the morning they were all there. Hardly a type was lacking—the last 16,000-ton double-turreted battleship, the protected and heavy-armored cruisers, monitors, despatch-boats, gunboats, destroyers, attendant transport, and supply ships. Fifty ships, 1,200 guns, 16,000 men: all were there, even to the fascinating little submarines with their round black backs just showing above the water.

It was that chromatic sort of a morning when the canvas of the sailing-boats stands out startlingly white against the drizzly sky and

the smoke from the stacks of the steamers takes on an accented coal-black, and, drooping, trails low in a murky wake. Rather a dull setting at this early hour; but not sufficiently dull to check the vivacity of the actors in the scene.

The President comes up the side of the *Mayflower* and, arrived at the head of the gangway, stands rigid as any stanchion to attention while his colors are shot to the truck and the scarlet-coated band plays the national hymn. Then, ascending to the bridge, he takes station by the starboard rail with the Secretary of the Navy at his shoulder. The clouds roll away, the sun comes out, and all is as it should be while he prepares to review the fleet, which thereafter responds aboundingly to every burst of his own inexhaustible enthusiasm.

And this fleet, which is lying to anchor in three lines of four miles or so each in length, with a respectful margin of clear water all about, is, viewed merely as a marine pageant, magnificent; as a display of potential fighting power, most convincing. No man might look on it and his sensibilities—admiration, patri-

otism, respect, whatever they might be—remain unstirred. To witness it is to pass in mental review the great fleets of other days and inevitably to draw conclusions. Beside this armament the ill-destined Armada, Von Tromp's stubborn squadrons, Nelson's walls of oak, or Farragut's steam and sail would dissolve like the glucose squadrons that boys buy at Christmas time. Even Dewey's workmanlike batteries (this to mark the onward rush of naval science) would be rated obsolete beside the latest of these!

It was first those impressive battleships; and bearing down on them one better saw what terrible war-engines they are. Big guns pointing forward, big guns pointing astern, long-reaching guns abeam, and little business-looking machine-guns in the tops—their mere appearance suggests their ponderous might. A single broadside from any of these, properly placed, and there would be an end to the most renowned flag-ships of wooden-fleet days. And that this frightful power need never wait on wind or tide, nor be hindered in execution by any weather much short of a hurricane, is assured when we note that to-day, while the

largest of the excursion steamers are heaving to the whitecaps, these are lying as immovable almost as sea-walls.

It is, first, the flag-ship which thunders out her greeting—one, two, three—twenty-one smoke-wreathed guns—while her sailormen, arm to shoulder, mark in unwavering blue the lines of deck and superstructure. Meantime the officers on the bridge, admiral in the foreground, are standing in salute; and in the intervals of gun-fire there are crashing out over the waters again the strains of the "Star Spangled Banner." And the flag-ship left astern, the guns of the next in line boom out, and on her also the band plays and men and officers stand to attention; and so the next, and next. And, the battleships passed, come the armored cruisers, riding the waters almost as ponderously as the battleships and hardly less powerful, but much faster on the trail; and they may run or fight as they please. After examining them, long and swift-looking, with no more space between decks than is needed for machinery, stores, armament, and lung-play for live men, the inevitable reflection recurs that the advance of mechanical power must color our dreams of ro-

mance in future. Surely the old ways are gone. Imagine one of the old three-deckers aiming to work to windward of one of these in a gale, and if by any special dispensation of Providence she was allowed to win the weather berth, imagine her trying, while she rolled down to her middle deck, to damage one of these belted brutes, who meantime would be leisurely picking out the particular plank by which she intended to introduce into her enemy's vitals a weight of explosive metal sufficient in all truth to blow her out of water.

After the cruisers passed the craft of comparatively small tonnage and power follow—the gunboats, transports, and supply ships; and, almost forgotten, the monitors, riding undisturbedly, like squat little forts afloat, with freeboard so low that with a slightly undulating sea a turtle could swim aboard. And after them the destroyers, which look their name. Most wicked inventions; no shining brasswork nor holy-stoned quarter, no decorative and convenient companionway down the side—no anything that doesn't make for results. Ugly, wicked-looking, with hooded ports from under which peer the muzzles of long-barrelled weap-

ons that look as if they were designed for the single business of boring, and boring quickly, holes in steel plate.

So the *Mayflower* steams down the four long lines in review; and always the batteries and bands in action, the immortal hymn echoing out like rolling thunder between the flame-lit broadsides. From shore to shore the cannon detonate and our fighting blood is stirred. On the pleasure craft skirting the line of pickets like vaguely outlined picture boats in the dim, perspective haze, the people seem also to be stirred. We dream of the glory of battle; but better than that, the hymn which has stirred men to some fine deeds in the past, and shall to just as brave in the future, mounts like a surging tide to our hearts:

"Oh, say, can you see?"

it is asking. And we can see—no need of the glass—ahead, astern, abeam, aloft, some thousands of them streaming in the fresh west wind, and within signal distance of their beautiful waving folds a multitude of men and women in whom the sense of patriotism must have be-

come immeasurably deepened for being within call this day.

The vibration of brass and pipe, the music and the saluting, one ship and the next, and never the welcome of one died out before the tumult of the next began. It was like the ceaseless roar of the ever-rolling ocean, with never an instant when the ear-drum did not vibrate to the salute of cannon, the blood tingle to the call of the nation's hymn. One felt faith in ships and crews after it; and later, when in the cabin of the *Mayflower* the admirals and captains gathered, to meet them and to listen was to feel anew the assurance that this navy will be ready when the hour comes to do whatever may be deemed right and well by the people.

The admirals and the *attachés* having departed and dinner become a thing of the past, it was time to review the electric-light display.

We were almost abreast of the first in line, and she was like a ship from fairyland. Along her run the bulbed lights extended, and thence to her turrets, and, higher up, followed the outline of stacks and tops and masts, with floating

strings of them suspended here and there between. Most striking of all, her name in gigantic, flaming letters faced forward from her bridge. Now one ship decked in a multiplicity of jewels on this clear calm night would have been a beautiful sight—but where there were forty-odd of them——!

It was a sailor of the fleet, lurking in the shifting shadows of the bridge, that he might enjoy his surreptitious cigarette and not suffer disratement therefor, who reviewed the illuminations most illuminingly. "Man, but they do blaze out, don't they? They make me think of the post-cards we used to buy in foreign ports. You held them up before the light and they came out shining like a Christmas-tree. But no ships of cards these—and that's the wonderful thing, too. Seeing them to-day, with their batteries in view, 'twas enough to put the fear o' God in a man's heart, and now look at them—like a child's dream of heaven —that is, if we don't sheer too close and see that the guns are still there. And, look now, the tricks they're at!"

Outlined in incandescents, the semaphores of a dozen ships were being worked most in-

dustriously. "Jerk up and down like the legs and arms of the mechanical dolls at the theatre, don't they? But these here could be dancing for something more than the people's amusement if 'twas necessary. And what are they saying? Oh, most likely it's 'The compliments of the admiral, and will you come aboard the flag-ship and try a taste of punch?' And 'With pleasure,' that other one is saying. And they'll be lowering away the launch and no doubt be having a pleasant chat presently. And they could just as easily be saying (if 'twas the right time), 'Pipe to quarters and load with shell'—just as easy; and they could revolve the near turret of that one, and ten seconds after they cut loose you and me, if we weren't already killed by rush of air, would be brushing the salt water from our eyes and clawing around for a stray piece of wreckage to hang on to. Just as easy—but look at 'em now again!"

The search-lights were paralleling and intersecting, now revealing the perpendicular depths beside the vessel, and now flooding the sky. Twenty of them, simultaneously flashing, were sweeping the surface of the Sound,

one instant outlining the arbored Long Island shore, the next betraying the beaches of Connecticut. One, beaming westerly, disclosed a loaded excursion steamer half-way to Hell Gate, and, a moment later, turning a handspring, picked up in its diverging path the Fall River steamer miles away to the eastward.

"The torpedo-boats'd have the devil's own time trying to lay aboard to-night, wouldn't they? And yet if 'twas cloudy 'twould be the submarines! Did you see them to-day? Weren't they cute—like little whale pups setting on the water—yes. They say they've got them where they turn somersaults now. Great, yes—but terrible, too, when you think they're liable to come your way some fine day. Imagine yourself, all at once, some night when you ought to be sound asleep in your hammock, finding yourself, afore you're yet fair awake, so high in the sky that you can almost reach out and take hold of the handle of the Dipper! And when you come down and get the official report, learning that one of those cute little playthings had been making a subaqueous call.

"It's ninety-odd years since the American

navy proved it could do a good job; for, of course, none of us count Spain, who wasn't ready to begin with, and wasn't our size, anyway. And yet, we mightn't make out so bad 'gainst a bigger enemy at that. Our fellows can shoot, that's sure. There's a gun crew in this ship we're breasting now, and I saw them awhile ago put eight 12-inch shot in succession through that regulation floating target we use, and it was as far away as the farther end of that line of cruisers there, and the target was bobbing up and down, and we steaming by at 10 knots an hour. Not too bad—hah? And a hundred crews like 'em in the navy. That's for the shooting."

He flicked the end of another fleeting cigarette over the rail. "Yes, the American navy has fought pretty well, and this navy, no fear, will fight too. There's more different kinds of people in it than ever before, they say—though as to that I guess there were always more kinds of people in the navy than the historians ever gave credit for. Now it's all kinds like the nation itself, I suppose. And that ought to make for good fighting, don't you think?

NAVY MEN

THE foregoing occasion was the first of several naval spectacles staged by Theodore Roosevelt during his presidency to show the public that we had a growing navy, and not too small a navy, and a navy that, ship for ship, need ask for no odds in its equipment at least.

More than any President we ever had did Theodore Roosevelt work for a big navy. To no President before him in our country did the prospect of a great European war loom so near; a war which meant our participation, not so much through any will of our people as by the pressure of happenings from the other side.

Hence, the need of the country for as large a navy as we could get together. With an eye for this future need President Roosevelt asked for 4 battleships a year. There were men in Congress who believed that to talk of war was foolish; there would be no more war; so, instead of 4, Congress gave him 2, and the

famous "big stick" had to come into play before they gave him even the two.

During these years I had the privilege from President Roosevelt of cruising on United States war-ships—gunboats, destroyers, cruisers, battleships (later, through the good offices of Secretary Daniels, I became acquainted with submarines and navy airplanes).

The war-ships were an interesting study, and the life aboard a war-ship then was even more interesting, for after all, men, not materials, were the chief thing. Almost any fairly well-trained bunch of mechanics will turn out a pretty good machine to order. But there is no turning out good men to order; only good-living generations can do that.

If it was a matter of machinery alone, then the Prussian idea would have this war already won. But that alone cannot prevail, can never prevail for the long run. It is the spirit which must win.

The personnel of the navy, officers and men, seemed always so much more interesting to me, that for one hour I spent in looking over ship equipment, I probably spent forty in observing the men; and when you are locked up

in ships for weeks or months with a lot of men you must, where your heart and mind are not closed, come away in time with some sort of knowledge of them.

And what sort are they?

Well, they are nearly all young—average age about twenty-one years; and they come from anywhere and everywhere—from the farms, the prairies, the corners of city streets; and they have been many things—farm-hands, carpenters, mechanics, barbers, trolley-car men, clerks, street loafers, college boys. Some are terribly sophisticated in worldly ways and some so green, of course, that the wags have frequent chances to keep their wits on edge. Some have come with the plain notion that if a fellow has got to fight, why then the navy offers the most comfortable outlook for a fellow—during this war it especially offers it—dry hammock every night, no mud, no cooties, and three hot meals at regular intervals—but many are there with the bright hope of some day pointing a 14-inch gun and sending a relay of 1,400-pound shells where they will blow something foreign and opposing high as the flying clouds.

Blowing up ships and people may have once

seemed a terrible idea, but a few weeks in the community of a war-ship with its matter-of-fact, professional manner of discussing such subjects soon brings them around to common, seagoing notions of the matter.

Four years ago at Vera Cruz our modern navy had its first taste of war. It was only a light touch of war, and there was no doubt of the outcome; but in little affairs men may be tried out, too. Through somebody's blunder, for which somebody should have been jacked-up, our bluejackets were sent up in solid sections to occupy a large open area on the Vera Cruz water-front. Standing there in solid columns, not knowing just what was going to happen, but feeling to a certainty that something stirring was going to happen, and to happen soon, they stood there grinning widely and waiting for the ball to open. It may have been their childish innocence, it may have been their untutored ignorance, but when that sheeted rifle fire first burst from the roof of the Naval College, and a solid squad or two of our lads went down, and following that the snipers began to get them in ones and twos and threes —when that happened there was no distressing

confusion in their ranks. When, later, it became necessary for the *Prairie* and *Chester* to fire just over their heads to batter the walls of that same War College, it made no difference. The ships' gunnery was rapid and excellent—they knew it would be—and when the shells went whistling through the walls of the second story, the marines and bluejackets stood under the first story and let them whistle. Plaster and bricks from the shaken walls came tumbling down upon them. They ducked beneath the falling mortar, some of them, but they all took their shells standing.

They are not the sailors of classic tradition, these battleship lads of the twentieth century. Every man to the age he lives in—it must be so. The old phrase, "Drunk as a sailor," meant, in most men's minds, drunk as a man-o'-war's man. I was born and brought up in a great seaport—Boston—and my earliest memories are of loafing days along the harbor front and the husky-voiced, roaring fellows coming ashore in the pulling boats from the men-o'-war; fine, rolling-gaited fellows, in from long cruises and flamingly eager to make the most of their short liberty. Great-hearted

men, who gave truth to the phrase—"and spending his money like a drunken sailor"—and knowing, usually, but two inescapable obligations—to do his duty aboard ship and to stand by a shipmate in trouble ashore. Almost any of the old-time policemen of the large seaports can tell you many fine tales of the riotous hours along the water-front in the old days.

Such is the passing tradition. The present lad of the navy is creating a new one. For one thing, he no longer gets drunk—that is, he does not get drunk by divisions. To illustrate:

During that greatest steaming stunt in all maritime history—the cruise of our sixteen battleships with their auxiliaries around the world—all naval records were broken in the number of enlisted men allowed ashore. Every day in large foreign ports saw 4,000 of our bluejackets and marines allowed shore liberty. Now consider the case of the first foreign port where liberty was granted, Rio de Janeiro in South America; and what happened in Rio was what happened in other ports.

It was five weeks or more since leaving home, and during that five weeks they had been for

twelve days steaming along one of the hottest coasts (Brazil) in all the world—the tropics—and it was summer-time once they were south of the line; and in all that time no chance for an enlisted man to get a drink of any kind of liquor—no beer or light wine even—no matter what the intensity of the thirst which may have possessed him.

Now he is suddenly thrown ashore with his pockets full of money. He has only to go to the paymaster and draw pretty much all he pleases. By actual figures the men of the battle fleet—about 13,000—drew $200,000 in gold to spend ashore in Rio—about $15 a man. For five or six weeks not a drop to drink, and all at once 4,000 of them thrown daily to roam into the midst of 500 grog shops with their pockets full of money, and no restrictions placed upon them, except one: they must be back to their ship that same night!

I was a passenger with that battle fleet, and night after night I stood on the great stone quay in Rio and watched them returning to their ships. On no night did I see more than forty or fifty who might be said to be "soused"; on no night did I see more than a dozen or

fifteen who had to be thrown into the accommodation barge with the "dead ones," the helpless ones who were so far gone that they had to be carried up the sides of their ships from the barge which made the last rounds of the fleet.

Now I would like to make an observation; gratuitous, but perhaps of human interest and pertinent right here: I think if we took 4,000 lawyers or doctors or authors or car-drivers or clerks—4,000 of almost any sort from civil life—and locked them up so that for five or six weeks in a warm or a cold climate they could not get a drink of any kind of liquor, no matter how great their fancied or real need; and at the end of that five or six weeks took the whole 4,000 of them, with their pockets full of money, and suddenly threw them into the middle of all the grog-shops of a great city—I do think that more than forty—that is, one per cent of them—would be found "soused"—that is, if we had means of locating them all at the end of the day.

The heroic sailor of tradition has passed—a sailor of another kind, but just as efficient and just as heroic in another way—the way of

his day—is rapidly creating another tradition. The lad who in the lusty days of his youth can thus hold himself in check is a pretty good product of American development. He pretty generally passes up the grog-shop, but he visits the art galleries, the museums, the cathedrals, the K. of C.'s, and Y. M. C. A.'s ashore, takes books from the library on shipboard, buys post-cards and mails them home to let his friends know of the great things in the world. On that world cruise referred to the men cleaned Rio de Janeiro out of 250,000 post-cards.

I doubt if many of them, on the first try, could lay out on a topsail-yard in a gale of wind without immediately falling overboard; but they don't have to lay out on topsail-yards nowadays. They do have to shoot, however; and they can shoot. Lay a gun's crew of them behind a big turret-gun and watch them make lacework of a target at 11,000 yards.

The main question is, Have we the spirit to-day? As to that, no man having yet devised any apparatus wherewith to measure energy of soul and mind, it is difficult to prove to whoever will not believe, or does not in him-

self possess the germ, the existence of this thing that may not be measured by foot-rule or bushel basket. The belching of powder and the roll of drumhead do not prove it. We can always hire men to do that, and to do it well. And yet, to be present at the review described in the preceding chapter was to experience the thrill that may not be measured, to note how the enthusiasm of the occasion seemed to be animating the crews, to share in the feeling of pride which mantled all cheeks, and, ship after ship slipping past, to feel that pride of fleet intensify, until we echoed the cry of the Commander-in-Chief, whose enthusiasm for all that is good for the nation is unquenchable. As the President said, it was a glorious day.

No doubt of it. Men had met and there was kinship in the meeting. From that auspicious opening in the morning when the clouds seemed to dissolve for the express purpose of allowing a fresh-washed sky to enter into the color scheme of the beautiful picture —blue dome, chalk-white and sea-green warships, green and blue and white-edged little seas—until that last moment at night when the last call on the last ship was blown and to

its lingering cadence the last unwinking incandescent of the fairy-like illumination was switched off, leaving the hushed and darkened fleet riding to only the necessary anchor lights on the motionless, moon-lit sound—who witnessed it all might not doubt the existence of that spirit which in conflict makes for more than thickness of armor or weight of shell.

We went to war; and it was with an immense confidence in what they would do that I heard of the sailing of our first group of destroyers for the business of convoying ships and hunting U-boats on the other side. Ships were up to date and officers and men knew their business; and there was something more than knowing their business.

Other groups of destroyers followed that first one, and a lot of us were wondering how they were making out. They had sailed out into the Atlantic—that we knew; but what were they doing? We who knew them believed they were doing well. But how well?

I thought it worth while finding out. I went to Washington and from Secretary Daniels and Chief Censor George Creel secured

necessary credentials, and through the War Department the word which would put me aboard a troop-ship.

It is only justice to Secretary Daniels to say that he granted me all aid even though I told him I would probably work for *Collier's* on the trip—for *Collier's* which had been pounding him editorially.

What I learned of this game of escorting ships and hunting U-boats is in the chapters which follow.

SEEING THEM ACROSS

HE had been on what most anybody would agree was pretty trying sort of work; and so, having an idea that a furlough was coming to him, he applied for it, but did not get it. The department had other things in view. Instead of going home, he took time to write a few letters, printing the one to his little girl in big capitals, so that—being six going on seven—she might, with mama's help, be able to read it.

They sent him to a ship that had been running between north and south ports on our own coast, shifting in winter-time to tropical waters. She was one of a group of thirty or forty that the department had on its little list to be made over into transports. She was the handsomest boat, but war makes nothing of beauty. Our officer ordered all her gleaming black underpaint off, also her pure white topside enamelling with the gold decorations here and there; then he swabbed her top and bottom with that dull blue-gray which the naval sharps say does blend best with a deep-sea background.

She had the prettiest little lounging-room. Our officers retained that—for even in war officers must have some place aboard ship to gather for a smoke and gossip—but they threw out the large, lovely fat pieces of furniture. In case of submarine attack or an order to abandon ship, the men might want to make a passage of that room in a hurry and no time there—in the dark it might be—to be falling over chairs and tables.

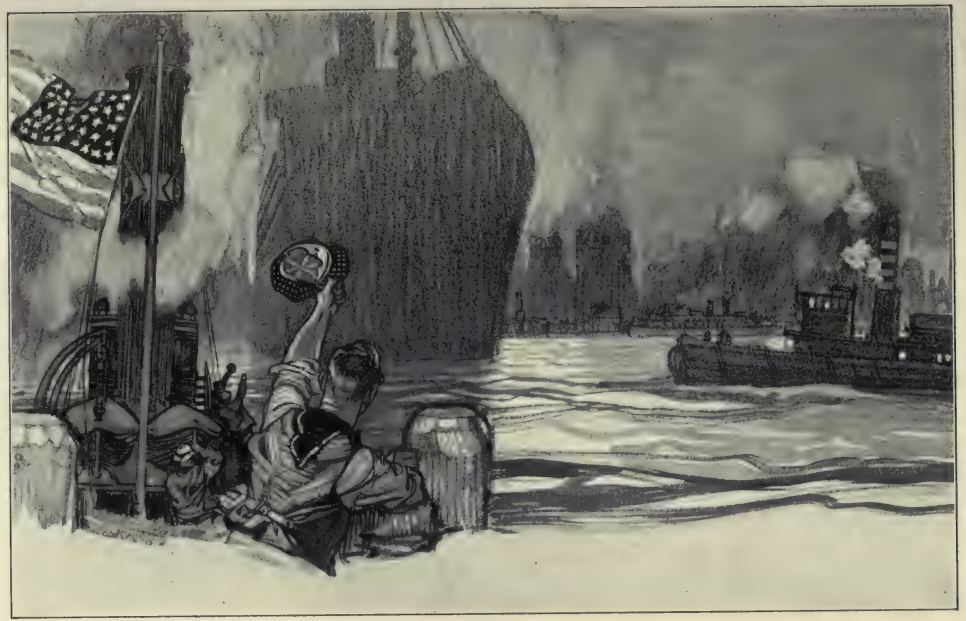
There was a sun-parlor, a large, splendid room with wide windows and the deck on three sides. There were thick draperies, filmy laces, and many easy chairs. In the old days cabin passengers used to sit there and absorb the soft tropic breezes while digesting their breakfasts. An army quartermaster-captain surveyed it with our naval officer. "Swell," said the Q. M. C. "We'll haul down that plush and fluffy stuff, dump those chairs and rugs over the side, plant my desk here, my chief clerk's there, my other clerks' desks over there, open those fine wide windows and let the north Atlantic breezes blow on our beaded brows while we're doing our paper work. Fine!"

Our naval officer did that and a hundred

other things to the inside and outside of the beautiful ship and reported her fit for transport service, or as fit as ever a made-over ship could be made to be, whereupon he was ordered to take her to such and such a dock in such and such a port—which he did. Then many large, heavy cases were lowered into her hold, and troops and troops and more troops filed aboard and took up what was left of the spaces between decks with themselves and their war gear.

She lay then with her water-line a foot deeper than anybody around there ever remembered seeing her in her swell passenger days; then she shoved out into the stream and kicked her way down the harbor, and as she did so, though there was not a single trooper's head showing above her rail, everybody seemed to know. Passing tugs, motor-boats, ferry-boats blew their whistles—every kind of a boat that had a whistle blew it—and there was an excursion boat loaded down with women and children. Her band had been playing ragtime, but it suddenly stopped and broke into "Good-by, Good Luck, God Bless You," to the troop-ship bound for France.

There was a war-ship waiting below—not the



She shoved out into the stream and kicked her way down the harbor, and as she did so . . . everybody seemed to know.

biggest by a good deal in our fleet, but big enough to have hope one day of firing her broadside on the battle-line. But the great duty of a war-ship is to be immediately useful. She was there, and smaller war-ships with her, to see that the troop-ships got protection on the run across.

Our troop-ship, other troop-ships, every one in turn, steamed up, reported her presence, and tucked into a berth under the wings of the big war-ship; and there they stayed until night, until the signal came to get under way. When it did, one after the other they up-anchored and kicked into line. They had been warned to make no fuss in going, and they made none. From somewhere ashore a great search-light swept our top structure, swept every top structure as we filed out. Some one on each top structure must have given the proper sign, for that was all.

All that night, and next day, for days and days thereafter, with shifting formations and varying speeds, we steamed. All were good, seaworthy ships, but little things will happen. There was one that was always lagging. The flag-ship, meaning the war-ship of most tonnage,

But neither can you see a submarine. And somewhere handy to you is a bunch of your own ships, and no telling when one of them may come riding out of the mist and climb aboard by way of your port or starboard quarter!

A whistle by day or a search-light by night would have been a great help to our naval officer on the bridge during that fog, but he was denied that. So he made out (as did every other commander on every other bridge during the fog) with whatever other means he could devise. Nothing happened to us.

The fog passed on, and then one day came a slaty gray sea and a slaty sky. Gray seas look hard; white crests moving across gray seas look hard too. Our naval officer took time to look around on them. Gray hulls were smashing high bows into them, making boiling white water of the hard gray sea and throwing it to either side in fine, high-rolling billows as they pressed on. They were a fine sight then, with the smoke pouring out and trailing low from some of them. They were not trying to make smoke, but if a ship must make smoke, it will not be seen so far on a gray day.

Our naval officer held the bridge from early that morning to nine o'clock that night. He had an idea that he might be able to sneak in a couple of hours' sleep against the strain of the later night. It was not bad weather when he left—a good breeze blowing and plenty of white showing. It was dirty, but not bad weather. He got in one hour in his bunk, turning in with his clothes on, when he was called to go on the bridge again. Something had happened. He could feel the increasing wind before he was fairly rolled out of his bunk.

As he stepped out on deck he could see that the lookouts had adopted life-belts for the night. The lookouts were men from among the troops, and now each man as he went off watch was handing over his life-belt to the next coming on. They had had to use the soldiers for lookouts. In these war days no merchant ship can supply from her regular crew one-tenth of the men needed for lookout work in the war zone. The soldiers were all right, but just then our naval officer felt sorry for them. He had been having them up before him afternoons, lecturing them on their duties

as lookouts. That very afternoon he had had a bunch of them before him while he explained a few new things. He had spent extra time on the men who were to be on forward watch this very night, with the men who were to go into the bow or into the forward crow's nest. And now they were there, buried as the bow went smash into it, or—those of them who had drawn the crow's nest—swinging a hundred feet in the air. All right for old seagoers, but most of these boys had never in their lives before been on an ocean-going ship. Some had never even seen a big ship until they came to the seacoast for their trip. They had great eyesight, some of these young fellows—men who had lain on the bull's-eye at a thousand yards regularly were bound to have that—and they made good lookouts once they got the idea, but climbing the last twenty feet of that ladder to the crow's nest, leaning back under part of the time with life-belt stuffed under their overcoats—they surely must have been thinking that a soldier's duties were difficult as well as various in these days of war.

A ship on tossing seas and the wind blowing a dirge through the rigging—well, a man may

be brave enough to fight all the Germans this side the Russian line, but if he is new to sea life he is apt to see things. Two soldiers were standing on deck when our naval officer came out of his room. They were not on guard. They did not have to be there—they were staying awake on their own account. One said to the other: "There, there—look! Ain't that a submarine?"

It was a shadow as high as a house. "If that is a submarine," thinks our officer, "then it is good night to us, for she's a whale of a one!"

It was no submarine. It was the shadow of one of their own ships which had been driven out of column.

It was blowing hard when our officer made the bridge. He could not see far, but far enough to see that the ocean was black, and that across the black of it the white patches were flying—dead white patches leaping high in the night.

The fleet was in direct column ahead, or should have been. Some were surely having their troubles staying there. This steaming close behind a ship, with another ship close behind you—and you have to be close up to see

from one to the other on such a night—made me think as I stood under the bridge that night: "Give me all the submarines in the world before this with a fleet that has not had a chance to practise evolutions."

There was not a steaming light of any kind, not even one shaded little one in the stern, which an enemy might see and, seeing, swing in behind it. Rather than show even the smallest little guiding light, our fellows preferred to steam this way in the night.

The glad morning came, glad for the reason that an almost warm, bright sun came with it. The sun showed three ships gone from the column. There was more than one of us who wished that we too had gone from the column about six hours ago. We would have slept better. Still, it was a good experience to have—behind you. Wind and sea went down; all hands felt better—especially the lookouts. Those who came down from the crow's nest looked as if the grace of God had suddenly fallen on them.

By and by we picked up the drifters. They were looking just as hard for us as we were for them; and later that day we ran into our escorts from the other side. Everybody at once felt

as if the trip was as good as over. The fact was that the worst part of the war zone was ahead of us. All hands were still turning in with life-belts handy, and most of them with clothes on, but there was a feeling that now it was up to these new escorts.

Before we reached France on this run we were in a U-boat fight, which I shall tell of later. What I want to say now is that the submarine fight had an enjoyable side to it, but as for that night run of our troop-ships in gale and sea—a big ship just ahead, a big ship just behind, big high-bowed ships plunging down at fourteen knots an hour from roaring waters in the dark—there was no fun in that!

Of the scores of devices the fleet used to beat the U-boats on that run across, a man can say nothing here. But to get back: our naval officer stuck to his bridge until one most beautiful morning he took his ship into a most beautiful port on a most beautiful shore. I never before heard anybody so describe that same port, but the general verdict says it did look pretty good.

This story of our troop-ship's run across is given from the view-point of the naval officer

in charge. It could just as well have been written from the view-point of the merchant captain or his officers aboard—all on the job; or the chief engineer or his assistants—all on the job, and who put in more than one hour guessing at what was going on above; or from the view-point of the quartermaster captain, or his clerks, or the oilers, or the firemen, or the water-tenders, or the cooks, or anybody else, high or low, in the ship's regular service.

This transport service is one tough game. It is well enough for us who have but one trip to make. But one trip after another! They had good right to look a bit younger when they made the other side. But before we can win this war we've got to get the million or two or three million men across; and the millions of tons of supplies. Somebody has got to see them across. These men on the troop-ships are doing it. May nothing happen to them!

THE U-BOATS APPEAR

THE soldier lookouts in the forward crow's nest had been especially advised to have an eye out for the convoys which were to pick us up as we neared the other side; and they were very much on the job.

One bright morning came: "Smoke three points off the port bow. . . . Smoke broad off the starboard bow. . . . Smoke dead ahead. . . . One point off the . . . Broad off the . . ." and so on. Their excited calls rattled down like rapid fire to the bridge; the thrill in their voices rolled like a wave through the ship. That smoke, incidentally, meant that the strangers, whoever they were, had already identified us and so were not afraid to let us see them.

Everybody that was not already on deck came running up to have a look for himself. It was our escort. Darting across our bows they came—low-riding, slim, gray bodies. The ranking one reported to our flag-ship; and all,

without any fuss or extra foam, took position and went to work as though they had been there for weeks. And as they did our big war-ship and the little ones which had come across with her wheeled about and went off. There was no ceremonious leave-taking. They simply turned on their heels and flew. They might as well have said: "We are glad to have met you and been with you, but we can do no more for you, so good-by and good luck; we're going back home as fast as we can get there."

A soldier watched them going and said: "The night before we left home I went to a show, and a fellow sang: 'Good-by, Broadway! Hello, France!' I thought it was great. I know what they're saying aboard those ships there now. 'Hello, Broadway! Good-by, France!' is what they're saying. And I betcher it'll be a straight line with no time wasted zigzagging for them on the way back!"

He had it about right. They carried the most eloquent sterns that any of us had seen on ships for a long time. The big one in the middle, the others like chickens under either wing—away they went, belting it for about sixteen knots good. In one half-hour all we

could see of them was a cloud of smoke to the west'ard. Just how far off the French coast we were at this time does not matter here, or from what direction we were approaching; but we were far enough off for that group of destroyers to show how they went about their work of guarding the troop-ships. To comb the sea about us was their mission; and they were attending to it every minute. The fleet steamed on.

We proceeded under advices not to fall asleep with too much clothes on, and never to get too far away from our life-belts. It may have been true that some men slept with their life-belts on, but it is probably not true that one man took his to the bathroom with him—not true because about the time we got that far along the steward refused to prepare any more baths. He had enough on his mind, he said, without fussing with baths.

There was one place we looked forward to passing with lively feelings. We may not name the place here, but here is how it was described: "Ever been to that big aquarium in Naples? Yes? Well, remember those devil-fish hiding behind the rock on the bottom? Along comes

an innocent young fish who is a stranger to those waters. Mr. Devilfish, hiding behind, has a peek at it coming. He waits. Mr. Young Fish drifts by his hiding-place, and then— Good night, young fishie."

That kind of talk in the watches of the night sounded like lively action before us. We waited for—call it the Devilfish's Cave—and waited; and the first thing we knew when we came to inquire further about it, we were safely past it, with never a sign of any devil-fish, unless it would be the one torpedo which went by the bow of one of us from some distance one noontime. Some distance it must have been because it was a clear day with a smooth sea, and under such weather conditions, with the hundreds of wide-awake lookouts in the fleet, no U-boat could have put up a periscope within any near distance and not be seen by somebody. As for long-distance shots from submarines—there is small need to worry about them. Subs like to get within a thousand yards or less. Those three and four mile shots —it is like trying to hit a sea-gull with a rifle. Amateurs try that kind of shooting, but the professional, who has to reckon the cost of

powder and shot, lets it pass. Not that the Germans are sparing of the cost of war, but a sub which has to make a voyage of three thousand miles to take on a fresh load of torpedoes is not firing too many for the mere practice.

We drew near the coast of France, and still nothing had happened. We were getting hails, of course, from the lookouts. There was one who called it a dull watch when he did not see at least one periscope. He had never seen a periscope in his life, but he had read about periscopes. One night just at dark he stood us all on our heads by reporting one just alongside. We all got a flash at it then, an ominous object, bobbing under our port quarter, and then it went down into our wake. It bobbed up again, and we all had another look. It was a beer-keg. The ship's first officer, the one who had a gold medal as big as a saucer for saving life at sea, eyed the keg, and then he eyed the lookout, saying: "An empty one too! If you'd only report a full one, we might gaff it aboard."

When that same first officer was one day asked if he intended taking his big medal with him in case we had to take to the boats, he

replied: "With twenty-eight persons in the boat! Good Lord, don't you think she'll be carrying enough freight?"

We steamed along, dark night astern this time and the white morning above our bow. The bridge—three naval and two ship's officers—had for some time been using the glasses. From aloft forward came the sudden yell: "Land ho!"

The bridge nodded that it heard. "Land ho!" repeated the lookout stentoriously. "Two points off the port bow," and then, peering doubtfully down at the bridge: "Am I right?"

"You are," said the bridge sweetly; "we've been looking at it for half an hour." Which was rather rough, for to shore-going eyes land does at first look like a low cloud on the horizon and, naturally, a fellow wants to make sure.

Pretty soon we could most of us see it from the deck, and it did look good. I once saw the flat, bleak Atlantic coast of Patagonia after ten days at sea, and the high iron wintry coast of Newfoundland after another period at sea, and I clearly recall that even they both looked like fine countries. And the coast of France was neither bleak nor icy, so you may guess

that it was a pleasing sight on this summer morning. It was a dream of a day, the sea like a green-tinted mirror, the sky blue as paint, and the softest little breath of air floating off the land to us. We were perhaps ten miles offshore.

The enchanted land lay before us and our troubles behind us—or so we thought—and yet we were many of us disappointed. After our more than three thousand miles we had not even caught sight of a U-boat.

Now, we probably did not want to see one, but we sort of had an idea that we were entitled to have one pop up and then disappear. Something to talk about, without anybody coming to harm through it—that was about our composite idea.

However, there are compensations for all things; we could now prepare peacefully for going ashore. I was in the lounge-room below sharpening a pencil, and, there being no waste-basket handy, carefully shunting the shavings into a writing-desk drawer.

The fire-alarm rang. That was the signal to hurry on deck with your life-belt, take your station by your boat, and prepare to abandon

ship. But we had been doing that every day since we left home. The first time we heard that call we had gone jumping, but after the third or fourth time we moved more leisurely.

Some took their life-belts from their rooms and started up. Every soldier, of course, grabbed one from where they were piled up in the passageways and went at once. They had no option. Their officers would get after them if they did not.

I thought I would finish sharpening my pencil. I thought I heard a blast from a ship's whistle somewhere outside; but I was not sure. Then I heard a blast from our own ship's whistle. Wugh-wugh-wugh! I did not wait for any more. I did not finish sharpening the pencil. I did not wait to shut the desk drawer. I did not do anything but move. There were six blasts from the whistle, and six blasts meant U-boats.

There was a heavy-set officer coming down the passageway. He was heavier by twenty pounds than I was, but I had more speed. I know I had. Not since the winter's day on George's Bank a quartering sea chased me down the cabin companionway of the *Charles W. Par-*

ker of Gloucester have I moved so fast on a ship, and I was fifteen years younger then. We bounced off each other. We did not stop to talk when we straightened out. He went his way and I went mine, and if I looked anything like him, then my jaw was thrust out and my eyes had an earnest look in them.

My life-belt was under my bunk. It did not stay there long. I went back down the passageway jumping. There was a fine crush going up to the boat-deck. Only a seagoing man knows how to take a ship's ladder with speed. You just got to have practice at it. There were some fine athletic boys among the troopers, but "Sweet mother," wailed a ship's man, "are those new army shoes made of leather, or are they lead that they move so slow?" And that comment did not have to travel a lonesome road.

While scooting up the ladder we heard a gun; and another gun. As we made the boat-deck there was another ship barking out six short blasts.

The ships of the fleet, when we got to where we could see them, were headed every which

way. We could feel our own ship heel over—she turned so sharply. Every ship in the fleet was going it—right angles, quarter angles, all degrees of angles. But what impressed us most—we almost laughed to see her—was the lubber of the fleet. She was twice the tonnage of most of us, and early in the run across she had brought anguish to our souls by the way she lagged. "You bum, you loafer, you old cart-horse, why don't you move up?" our soldiers used to yell across at her. She had not then enough men in her steam department to keep her engines warm, so she reported. But now she had steam enough. She was wide and high, a huge hulk of a ship, and here she was now charging—charging was the word—like a motor-boat at where somebody said the U-boat had just submerged. Whether she got her U-boat, I don't know; but she certainly did cut through the water for about a mile.

The ship next behind us went after something; and the ship next ahead went tearing away after something else, and another ship—but, man, a battalion of eyes could not follow them all. A destroyer went—zizz-sh zizz—a thirty-odd knot clip—and the next thing we

saw was a ten-foot column of solid white water shooting straight up beside that destroyer.

And then came the terrific Bo-o-om! Our ship shook from one end to the other. I thought it came from inside of us—that it was a loading-port door let drop by some careless ship's man below. The ship's officer in charge of our life-boat thought so, too. He stepped to the ship's side to look down. "That one, he should be put in the brig—scaring us all like that!" I agreed with him heartily, only I thought he should be put in a second brig after he got out of the first one. Some time later we learned that it was the shock from the bomb dropped by the destroyer, from which you can gauge what chance the submarine will have which happens to catch one of those bombs on its back.

We carried two 5-inch guns in our bow and two astern. Those gun crews had been standing by those guns from the first day out. For the last three days they had been sleeping near them in their life-jackets and taking their meals standing beside them. They were not going to be left out of it. About a thousand yards away some one reported a floating tor-

pedo. Whether it was a live or a spent one made no matter. It was too soft a target; besides, some ship in the hurry of manœuvring might run into it. Bang! went two of our 5-inch fellows, one from each end of the ship and both together.

That was when we heard from our chief engineer. He had been below from the beginning, and knew from the way the bells were coming down from the bridge that there was something doing topside. When the destroyer dropped her first bomb he wondered if the ship was torpedoed. He waited, and his men, with their shovels and slice-bars and oil-cans—they waited, every one of them, with one sharp eye to the nearest ash-hoist, which reminded the chief that he would never leave home again—and this time he meant it—without installing those four more ladders leading up from the engine and fire-room quarters to the decks. No, sir, he would not.

But nothing happened! And then those two 5-inch guns went off together. War-ships are built to withstand impact, but merchantships—no. This time the chief was sure she was torpedoed. His fire-room force were mostly

Spaniards. He used to talk at table about his fire-room gang. "You would think, with your ship coming through the war zone and your watch down in the bottom of her, that you would want to go up topside when your watch was done, for, of course, if any U-boat got the ship, it would be the fellows below who would first get the full benefit." But that gang of his! "Doggone, they'd sit there when their watch was over, six or eight of 'em, and play some cross-eyed Spanish card-game for a peseta a corner. What d'y' know about them?"

The chief's gang could not talk English, but they had speaking eyes. They now looked at the chief, and he went up to have a peek. He came back soon. "They are having target practice," he told them. He had been running the Caribbean ports long enough to be able to say that much in Spanish; but more than all he smiled as he said it. You want to smile to get away with anything like that in the fire-room of a troop-ship in the U-boat country.

Every ship in the fleet was now having something to say with her guns; and with their incessant manœuvring at such close quarters the sea was all torn up by their wakes. Two

or three wakes or bow waves would cross each other, and the sea would roll up with a bounding white crest. There were also the wakes of hidden submarines. You could tell them if you saw any by the way they did not stop in one place; they moved on. When a gunner saw a submarine wake he fired; where he wasn't sure he fired anyway. What was he there for? Bang! Boom! Solid shot were ricochetting, piling up little white splashes, and the shrapnel were making little holes and bursting into little white smoke puffs all over the place.

You must not forget that it was a beautiful day and a perfectly calm sea with the shore of France looming like a blue mirage on the horizon. It lasted about forty minutes altogether, and through it all the little destroyers—don't forget them—were weaving in and out among the big ships; and on the big ships were thousands of troopers, white life-belts around their olive-drab uniforms, standing steadily by lifeboats and rafts.

Our fellows on the destroyers did handle their little ships well. And the troop-ships were handled well—no collisions and no gun-shells

going aboard anybody else. A few went across other people's bows and sterns, but not too near to worry. And in the middle of it all, our guns made so much noise that before we heard them we saw them—two airplanes, whirring and cavorting about and above us. Whenever they saw a destroyer turn and shoot, they would turn and shoot after the destroyer. They could move about three times as fast as a destroyer, and so quite often beat the destroyer to it.

Later the airplanes escorted us into port. They were big, powerful biplanes, and carried a sky-pointing gun mounted forward and the colors of France painted on their little wings aft. They kept circling about us until we made our harbor. Whenever they swooped low enough our troopers gave them a fine cheer.

My job being to tell what I saw and heard, I want to say here that throughout the entire mêlée I never saw one periscope! And there were thousands like me who never saw a periscope. But there were hundreds of others—cool, sensible people—who are ready to make affidavits that they did see periscopes.

Why did not more of us see any? Well, a

submarine commander needs to turn up his periscope for only four, five, six, or seven seconds to have a look. If you do not happen to be gazing directly at the spot, you do not see it or the white bone which it makes going through the water.

On my ship the ranking officer was a regular army colonel who had seen active and dangerous service in the Philippines and elsewhere. He is given rather to understatement than overstatement of facts—a cool, level-headed observer. He saw a periscope. We had another officer who had been in the service in the Spanish War, had got out and was now back. He was probably the best lookout of all the army officers in the ship—a solid, substantial man with a keen eye. He could see what anybody else could see, but further than that you had to show him. Several of us had already christened him "Show me." He reported two periscopes. Now he had never seen a submarine operating in his life. I asked him to describe the action of the periscope. He described it perfectly as I had noticed it in trial trips of submarines off Cape Cod, which is where the Electric Boat Company used to try

theirs out before turning them over to purchasers.

My own notion of it is that the U-boats have many of us bluffed. They must be capable men who go in submarines; of good nerve, quick wit, and the power to withstand long nervous strain. Such men in a submarine are going to throw great scares into people of less capacity on surface ships. Put such men somewhere else than in a submarine and they will outwit men not so well equipped for the war game.

But these men, no men, can make the submarine do impossible things. Before firing a torpedo the submarine must come near enough to the surface to stick out her periscope, to have a look around to locate her target. In sticking out the periscope, lookouts on ships are likely to see it. On merchant ships they do not keep a lookout which combs the sea thoroughly; they do not carry men enough for that. The strain of such a lookout is great. Men cannot stand to it as to an ordinary watch; they have to be relieved frequently; and so submarines may have an advantage over merchant ships, especially if the merchant ships are slow-

moving freighters. But a war-ship, or a troop-ship in convoy is something else. Troop-ships carry an immense number of lookouts, not overworked men who are liable to go to sleep on watch, but keen-eyed young fellows of high vitality, surrounded by other young fellows of high vitality, and all competing to see who can see something first.

They will spot a periscope, under normal conditions, at a pretty good distance; which does not mean that that periscope is at once going to be blown out of the water. Hitting a piece of 4-inch pipe at any distance is not easy; the pipe moving and the ship moving does not make it any easier.

But the submarine has shown herself. To get her torpedo home she will have to move nearer. With a thousand eyes looking for her and five, six, a dozen ships with four guns or more apiece waiting to have a crack at her, she is not going to have a pleasant time after she moves nearer. She must show her periscope again to locate her target. To show her periscope she must get her hull somewhere near the surface; it takes a little time—not so much, but a little time to get her hull safely

below again; and while she is doing that who can say that not one of our five, six, or a dozen ships will be handy to the spot? And if one of our ships should happen to be handy enough, what can save the submarine from being rammed? And if she is rammed there is no hope for her—she is gone.

I am pretty much of one mind with our first officer in this submarine matter. In the middle of the combat off the French coast he was making the rounds, cutting away the lashings which held the life-boats to the davits—this in case we had to leave the ship. He had a squint at the banging guns, the charging troop-ships, the flying destroyers; and then he looked up long enough to say: "A fat chance a U-boat would have if she so much as stuck her nose out. In four seconds she'd be like a rabbit among a pack of hunting-dogs. She might get away, but I bet you no bookmaker would take her end of it."

This argument does not apply to a slow-steaming freighter going it alone; it is for the matter of troop-ships moving at a fairly good speed. For myself that time the fleet steamed in direct column ahead, one ship jam up be-

hind another, in a rough sea and on a black night, at high speed without lights of any kind, they did a more difficult thing than to evade or stand off half a dozen U-boat attacks. No fleet of ships can be put beyond all danger of submarine attack, but the danger to the subs can be made so great that it won't be worth the price the attacking force will pay.

I do not know how many U-boats were in that attack. The official figures will no doubt be given out in time. Our moderate estimators here put it down as three, with one transport ramming and sinking one U-boat. Two honest lads of one of our own forward gun crews say that our ship bumped over another. They felt the bump. Perhaps they did, but bluejackets at twenty years of age are apt to be optimistic, as witness:

The day after that U-boat fight the skipper, first officer, chief engineer, and myself were trying our French on a waiter in a café ashore, but not quite putting it over; we had to resort to a little English to get action for one important item of our meal. A party of American bluejackets—gun crews—were at another table. They heard us speak English,

whereat one of them called over: "Say, you guys comprong English? Wee, wee? Then you oughter been where we were yesterday. Yuh'd seen something. Fighting U-boats we were. Comprong? U-boats—wee, wee, U-boats. Thirty-six of 'em came after us an' we sunk twelve. Whaddyer know about that?" We did not know, so we opened up a bottle of the ordinary red wine of the country, price deux francs, and drank to their enthusiastic health.

CROSSING THE CHANNEL

TO get out of France after getting in, a man has to go to Paris, see the prefect of police, various consuls, and so on. It was all interesting—the life in Paris—but it had nothing to do with U-boats. I had to go to England, and to make England, I had to go to Havre.

And I was in Havre. Looking out the window at a roof across the narrow street was a sign which read Hotel of the Six Allies. The Six looked as though it had been painted over. The head waiter told me later that it had. It had begun at three, then it became four—five—now six. But there were more than six now—did not the great United States count? Oh, yes, truly yes—but the paint and painters! They were growing more scarce. The war—yes. Everything was the war.

The head waiter was a little old fellow with a round back, a quizzical eye, and the hair of a first violin. After I beat my way by main strength through three table-d'hôte meals with

him he let me know that he could talk English. Why hadn't he told me so before? Oh! Did I not wish to practise my French? So many did, and if they made him understand, the tips were sometimes more inspiring.

The steamer for England had been scheduled to leave the night of the day our train arrived, but she did not leave. We did not learn whether it was the full moon or the U-boats shifting their hunting-grounds or the late air-raids on the south coast of England. Whatever the cause, no one growled much. The steamship people and the government were doing their best with a difficult service. The delay gave us another day to look the port over. I had been there years before. Then it was all French; now it seemed to be mostly British. The streets, the shops, the cafés, were crowded with English, Canadian, and Australian soldiers. British soldiers were running the tramcars. In the country outside was a large British camp. The French owners of the ships and of the cafés in the narrow streets near the jetties catered especially to the British soldier and sailor. English tobacco, English rosbif—they advertised these in quaintly worded signs.

Ships lay between the jetties and the breakwater, coasting and deep-water steamers, and the little fishing-cutters with the tanned sails. There was a fleet (or a flock) of seaplanes all ready to take to either the water or the air. They took to both while we looked, hurdling the breakwater from the basin to get more quickly to some smoke on the horizon. They were brand-new planes all, with the most beautiful polished maple pontoons and bright varnish over paint that still smelled fresh.

Soldiers not so worn and weary as those on the hospital veranda came down to the jetty promenade. Priests, nursing sisters, other soldiers and sailors came also. What interested them most was the sun shining on the bright new wood of the planes flying out to see what the smoke meant. It was a ship from across the ocean somewhere, and the planes circled it into the basin—one more ship which had beat the U-boat game and brought home something needed. There was some noise along the jetty and yet more noise in the wide and narrow streets of the town—clanging trams, whip-cracking fiacres, yelling newsboys, honking taxis, and soldiers and sailors tramping the

pavements. Noise enough, and of the kind befitting a Channel port in war time; but for a time at least we heard the noise let down, and the bustle softened.

In a wide street of shops appeared a white-haired priest with a white crucifix held high before him. Behind him was another priest reading from a book of prayer. Two laymen came next, bearing a little white-painted table with a little white coffin—a cheap board coffin—resting on it. There was a canopy of plain white boards over the little coffin. There were a few white blossoms on the canopy and beside the coffin a few lilies of the valley—only a few.

Two other laymen followed the coffin bearers. All the men were bareheaded. Three women—young women and young mothers to look at—followed the two men. One of the young women was in deep black. A group of little girls followed the young woman. Two very old women came last. No more than that, walking through a crowded street at two o'clock of a bright day!

It was on us almost before we saw it. Men took off their hats as it passed; women blessed

themselves. Sometimes men's lips murmured a short prayer; always the women did. The soldiers and sailors, when they were French, saluted nearly always; the British sometimes. The officers, if anything, saluted more profoundly than the enlisted men, and, when they did not stop dead, held a hand to their caps for eight or ten paces in passing.

Two soldiers were talking with two girls of the streets. One of the soldiers took off his cap. One of the girls stopped talking to say a little word of prayer. Both soldiers faced about, and all four gazed in silence for long after the little cortège had passed on. Then the first soldier put on his cap, all faced about, and resumed their talk, but more slowly and not quite so loudly as before.

An English Tommy was driving a tram—a swearing Tommy that you could hear a block away. He came on the mourners from behind. He was in a hurry, and by clanging his bell he could have crowded by. But he held the tram in check, nursing it so as not to frighten the two old women in the rear—until they came to a wide square. Here there was room. He clanged his bell, not too loudly, turned on the

juice, and hurried to make up for lost time. Men are being killed by the million over here, and other men who have been there—these very men on these streets—will tell you that they hardly turn their heads to see one more killed. But a little child is different.

Our steamer was to sail next night—at what hour no one could say, but it was well to be there in good time, we were told, so we went with the hotel bus. A little porter woman was there with my 70-pound bag before I even knew "things were ready"; and she said she did not roll it down the five flights from my room. She carried it every stair step of the way. Her husband was in the war, and she had five children and it required more than a few sous in the week for five children, the eldest fourteen. I agreed that it did.

Swinging on to the jetty, we had to take notice of a shop advertising to rent life-saving apparatus for the trip across the Channel. It was fine—a one-piece suit which came from the toes to the ears and a hood which you could turn in over your head! There was a painting of a torpedoed passenger ship going up in flames, topside and the hull settling down into

the rolling billows. Men and women were jumping into the sea and drowning in agony. They had no life-saving, one-piece suits. But all were not so thoughtless. There were others floating along high out of water with the most beatific expressions on their faces. They had been thoughtful enough to buy one of the patent one-piece suits. The painting was in colors, red and black mostly.

The afternoon had closed in showers, and when we made the steamer landing we stood in pools of water in the hollows of the worn stone flags. We were in good time, but a hundred or more who had been in better time were already inside the shed. The hold-overs from three days were there, military people mostly. We waited—and waited—and waited. It was the eternal passport matter. One at a time they had to pass the tribunal inside. A pleasant-mannered young English soldier stood guard at the shed door. Every half-hour or so, at command of a voice from the inside, he would let another dozen or twenty slide by. When he did so, those of us in the rear would hurry to fill the void, picking up our baggage from our feet as we pushed on. I had hired a porter,

an old man, to look after my 70-pound bag. He stood by patiently for two hours or so. Then, without warning, he ran off and did not come back. I had not paid him, so he must have grown very tired. After that, whenever I moved forward, I had to pick up my two bags myself—the other weighed 40 pounds. Sometimes I put the bags into a pool of water—sometimes I put my feet.

Not every one had to wait. An officer would be passed through immediately, which did not please two enlisted men near me, just back from what they called rough work at the front. The little one, called Scotty, had a fear that the boat might leave before he could get there. He wanted to "mak' a train oot o' Lunnon" at two of the next afternoon, "mak' a nicht train oot o' Glesgie" (Glasgow) and surprise his folk by walking in on 'em "afore brekkist." They would be glad to see him, be sure.

"Almost as glad to see you come as they was goin'?" asked the soldier with him, and then urged Scotty to stop over in London for a bit o' fun.

"I'll not," said Scotty. "I'll mak' the trains as I said an' surprise 'em afore brekkist. Be-

sides, there's a football match on for the arternoon arter to-morrer, and an old pal o' mine is playin' for'ard for oor team. But let 'em allow all these officers aboord first—'ere's anither ane—listen tae 'im!"

But it was not an officer this time. It was a voice asking if any privileges were accorded a King's messenger. The guard at the door said certainly, but where was he? Everybody made way for the voice. He turned out to be a little man with a scraggy beard and large round spectacles. The guard eyed him doubtfully. The King's messenger stood on his toes and whispered up into the guard's ear.

The guard looked down on him. "King's messenger! Go on with yer!" He shoved him back.

"Yes, garn with yer!" said Scotty, "but he's gained a guid half oor wi' his King's-messenger talk. I think I'll hae tae be something important masel' sune."

The soldier with Scotty could speak French. He spoke it to a pretty young French girl and her mother who had been pressed up against them. The mother had a new hat in a big paper box. Whenever the rush threatened to

crush the hat-box, she would hold it high over her head till she could hold it no longer, when she let it get crushed.

Whenever the girl spoke to the other soldier Scotty would want to know what she said. "She's sairtainly pretty. What did she say that time, Tid?"

Tid kept to himself what she said. "It's a cut above the likes of you we're discussin'," said Tid.

"She'll be goin' to England to marry an English officer," said Scotty.

The girl whirled on him. "No. No Engleesh officier—a French officier!"

"I had a notion you'd spoil it," said Tid.

"Ma Gud," groaned Scotty. "I wonder, Tid, did she hear a' I said this nicht o' her, and ma lips no two feet frae her ear!"

The night was growing cooler. The girl's fur neck-piece slipped down from her shoulders. The mother had passed her the hat-box, and the girl had no hand free for the neck-piece. Scotty put it back for her. She thanked him sweetly.

"You're no mad noo?" said Scotty. "I'll tak' a steady billet tae put it back." He took

to slyly stroking the fur piece when he thought she could not see him.

A woman lost her passport, but did not know it until she was about to be passed through the door. Then she shrieked. She came back in the crowd to look for it. She had been standing in one spot for an hour—it must be there. She rushed to the spot, lit a match, and began to look under her feet. A man lit a match and began to look under his feet. Another man lit a match and began to look under his feet. We all lit matches and began to look under our feet.

She shrieked again. "Ma Gud, she's a dyin' woman!" said Scotty.

She was not. She had found her passport. The business of waiting was resumed by the rest of us.

The little cafés along the water-front were closing; loads of soldiers and sailors began to flow out on to the jetty. One began to sing, and another; others to whirl along in grotesque dance steps. Two began to talk loudly. They came to blows. A third one stepped in to stop it, whereupon one of the first two turned on him to inquire what he was interfering for.

"But he's a friend o' mine," explained the third man.

"Is he a better friend o' yours than o' me? Answer me that. Is he? Do you know him longer than I know him? No? Then mind your own and do not be interferin'." The third man felt properly rebuked. He withdrew his objections and the other two resumed their fight.

We were inside the shed at last; and by and by I came before a man in a little office inside the shed. He was a Frenchman, but spoke good English.

"Your passport, please."

I produced it. He took a look and passed it back.

"Any gold on your person?"

"Thirty dollars—American."

"Hand it over, please. Wait. Are you American?"

"I am."

"In that case keep it. That is all. Pass out. Next."

Next came a little house with a row of men sitting at a long, narrow pine-board table. The first had a quick look at my passport and

handed it on to a man who sat on his left before a card index in boxes. That one dug into his boxes, found what he was looking for, and slid the passport along to the next on his left, who slid it along to the man on his left, and he to the man on his left, and he to the last one.

You chased that passport down the line, answering the questions which each one put in turn, as to where you last came from, where before that, and before that, and the date, your business, where you were going in England, why, for how long, and where you would stay. They were all pleasantly put, but you had the feeling that let you stumble and it would be God help you. Each asked a question or two that nobody else had thought of. The last one had the least of all to say. He probably thought that if, after all, you were a German spy, you had earned your exemption. He only made a note of your name, handed out a red card, said to give it to the soldier at the outgoing door, claim your baggage, have the customs inspector pass it, and go aboard the steamer when you liked. All I saw liked to go aboard at once.

There was a man of many buttons behind a

shining brass grill on the steamer—French, apparently, but also speaking plain English. I handed in my ticket and asked for a berth. He was snappy. "Have you one reserved?"

"Why, no. When I bought my steamer ticket I was told that there would be no need to reserve a berth—there would be plenty."

"He told you wrong. There are no berths."

"But is he not your agent—the man who sold me the ticket?"

"No."

"But you accept his ticket?"

"There is no berth."

"You mean that I pay for a first-class ticket on your steamer and then have to walk the deck?"

"There is no berth, I say." He talked like a machine-gun, and the marble Roman gods were not more impassive as he turned to the next. I saluted him. You just have to honor a man who knows exactly what he wants to say and says it, which did not prevent me from saying over the next one's shoulder what I thought of his manners, the ethics of his company, and the cheek of the well-known tourist agency which had sold me the ticket in Paris.

But it did not get me anything. He went right on about his business of turning more people away.

I had a look around. The smoking-room air was all blue, and all khaki as to chairs and tables. Also all khaki as to sleeping-quarters. They had been campaigning for a year or more on the western line, and had not lost any time here. And every blessed one of them had a whiskey and soda before him. They were talking, but not of the war. They were going home for a ten days' leave after a year at the front and were trying to forget the war. There was also a lounge-room and a dining-saloon, but bunks there were also already commandeered by the strategic military.

It could be a worse night to walk the deck. To see what was doing a man would want to walk the deck anyway.

There was a fine bright moon mounting above the housetops of the water-front when we slid away from our jetty berth. Slid is the word. She was all power, this Channel steamer of hardly 1,500 tons, yet with two great smoke-stacks, three propellers, turbine-engines, and burning oil for fuel. That last is a cheerful

item when you have to walk the deck—it means no cinders in your eyes.

Fuss? A strange word to her. She slipped like running oil from the jetty, past the breakwater lights, out by the few craft anchored there—a fast one for sure. To get a line on her speed, you had but to watch the shore marks fall away or the water slide by her side as out into the Channel she went.

People without berths, but with a chair and a rug from the head steward, began now to tuck away. At first they sat mostly by the rail watching things. Later they sought snugger corners; but two o'clock of a September morning in 50° north is still two o'clock in the morning. They began to go inside. The lights were turned off inside the ship, so when you walked around in there and felt your foot come down on something soft, you needed to tread lightly—that would be somebody's neck or stomach. There were life-rafts on the top deck, of a homelike sort of model, in the form of two benches with the air-tanks under the benches. If anything happened to the ship, you could go floating off with all the comforts of a seat on a bench in the park—if too many

did not try to have seats at the same time. It was a fine night for anybody to spot us, but just as fine a night for us to spot them. And a ship cutting out devious courses at twenty-one knots, or whatever she was logging—she is not too easy to hit. To lay out for the ten and eleven knot cargo boats is more economical. Still, who knows? We paid tribute to the U-boats by making détours. All the big stars of the night were out, and by them we could follow her shifting courses. But no harm; she had speed enough to sail the Channel sidewise and still bring us in by morning. The night grew older and cooler. The last of the people who had paid toll to the steward for a chair and rug went inside. Only one couple were left; and they had not hired any chair. He was a young officer, and they sat under his olive-drab blanket, on a life-raft bench athwartship. From there without moving they could get sidewise peeks at the climbing moon. At five o'clock in the morning they were still sitting there, heads together and arms across each other's shoulders.

When we grew tired of walking we sought little anchorages. By two o'clock any man on

deck could have had his pick of abandoned chairs, but they were not good chairs—the extension part too short. One very young Canadian officer opened up his kit, made a bed and what lee he could of the forward smoke-stack. A round smoke-stack makes a poor lee, but once tucked in he stuck, and was there in the morning when clear light came.

The moon went behind clouds, and from the clouds little cold showers of rain came peppering down. Heavier clouds came, and heavier squalls with rain; and a mean little cross sea began to make. Straight ahead, above the little seas a light showed, and soon another—this a powerful one. We were still going at a great clip. We might know it anew by the way that big light jumped forward to meet us. Soon we had it off our bow, abeam, on our quarter; we were inshore.

A destroyer came out to meet us and blinked a message from screened lights. More ships met us. We passed other ships—all kinds of ships, of which in detail a man must not write here.

In good time and in smooth waters we made our landing. There was another long wait, the

same passport grilling, but in a different way, and then a fast train to London. A taxi then, a room, a shave and bath, clean linen, and—oh boy!—the roast beef of old England and people you knew to talk to!

THE CENSORS

BEFORE a visiting correspondent can do anything on the other side he has to report to a censor somewhere. In London the Chief Admiralty Censor was a retired Royal Navy captain and a Sir Knight, but not wearing his uniform or parading his knighthood. He was quartered in an old dark building where Nelson used to hang out in the days before Trafalgar. There was a sign on the door:

DON'T KNOCK. COME IN

He was a good sort, with not a sign about him of that swank which so many of the military caste seem to think it necessary to adopt. He was perfectly willing to pass me on to our naval base and go right ahead with my work; but he did not have charge of the naval base. There was an admiral over there—not an American admiral—who had full charge of our war-ships there. Without his permission not one of them could tie up to a mooring in the harbor. I would have to get his permission even to

visit the base. My very human censor in London said he would cable to him and let me know just as soon as word came.

Awaiting the pleasure of the naval base dictator held me two weeks in London. While waiting I had a look over the city. It was during a period when the moon was ripe for air-raids. There were seven of them in nine nights. My business in life being to see things and then to write about them, I walked the streets during two of them and viewed some of the others from club and hotel windows.

The underground railway stations did a great business while the raids were on; also bomb-proof basements. In a newspaper office, where I used to visit, were precise directions how to get to their bomb-proof cellar. And be sure to take the right one. They had two cellars, but only one was bomb-proof. Shops in the expensive shopping districts had signs up, advertising their bomb-proof cellars and inviting their patrons to make use of them; but the trouble with the shops was that most air-raids took place after they had shut up for the day.

There was a local regulation which said that when an air-raid was on any person at all might

knock at the door of any house he pleased and claim admittance. If he were not admitted at once he could call a policeman, who would have to see that he was admitted. We used to speculate on what would happen if some hobo knocked at the front door of the town house of the Duke of Westminster, say, and demanded of the butler in plush knee-breeches that he be let in.

The chief defense against the Goths was a barrage of guns mounted mostly on the roofs of buildings. An expected air-raid would be announced by policemen running through the streets on bicycles, on their chests and back were signs: AIR RAID ON. They also blew whistles.

The great search-lights would sweep the skies, and by and by there would be a great banging of barrage guns. Bang, bang, bang—that would be the defense guns. Boom! That would be a bomb. Bang, bang, bang, and Boo-oom! The guns fired 3-inch shrapnel. Three miles into the air the shrapnel shells would go! And what goes up has to come down. The next thing would be shrapnel showering into the streets. It seemed to me that I would rather take my chance with the bombs than with the shrapnel. A bomb came down, exploded, and

had done with it; but the shrapnel fell all over the place.

You could see the shrapnel shells bursting high in the air—a beautiful sight—twinkling like big yellow stars, and then fading out. They would look more beautiful if only the pieces of them would stay up there after they burst. I was in Oxford Circus one night when a hatful of shrapnel fell about 20 feet away. One piece was about 5 inches long. Imagine that falling down from a height of 3 miles and hitting a fellow on the head. It would go clear on down through to your toes. Before any American city is raided I hope some chemist will invent a barrage shell which will dissipate all its energy and substance in the bursting. Surely an airplane can be wrecked by concussion.

An Australian soldier and a girl were standing in a doorway near me watching the shells burst. His was that common case—a soldier in London on leave, speculating on where the shrapnel would fall, and becoming peeved as he thought of it. "A hell of a place for a man to come on leave! I came here to get rest and quiet, and I run into this gory mess!"

While waiting the permission of the British authorities I learned that all a correspondent's troubles do not come from foreign censorship. An American newsman had cabled over something which did not please one of our admirals then in London. Meeting that same admiral, I put in a word for my trip to the naval base, thinking that he might warm up and hurry things along for me. He warmed up, but on the side away from me. He recounted the enormous villainy of that newsman, and in conclusion said: "Perhaps, after all, the best way to do is not to allow you newspaper men to send a word at all!"

Such an air of finality! He spoke as though he owned the navy; also the press.

One now and again grows up like that. By taking care not to die, and in the absence of plucking boards, they rise to be admirals. Then side-boys, the bosun's pipes, the 13 guns coming over the side—all this ritual goes to their heads. They get to thinking after a while that the whole business is a tribute to their genius, or valor, or something or other personal. Perhaps all this one needed was a little salve; but I thought it up to some writer

to fire a shot across his bows. So I came back with: "That's all very well, sir, about your not allowing a word to be sent, but there may be another point of view. There are 110,000,000 people over in our country, and some of them may not look on our navy as the sole property of its officers. They may want to know what that navy of theirs is doing over here. And perhaps no harm in telling them—or some day they may decide to have no navy at all."

Imagination was not his long suit, so he had no card to follow with. But he did glare.

After two weeks of waiting I got word from my very human London censor that I might leave for the naval base. I left from Euston Station during an air-raid. The station had been darkened hours earlier, and it was a new kind of sport going around that big black place to locate the cloak-room, and after you got the cloak-room to identify your baggage from a big tumbled pile.

I lit a cigar, and as I did a policeman jumped me for showing a light. Stopping to light it under my hat, a tall, able woman, dragging a trunk by the strap, bowled into me. While we

were in our compartments, the train all made up, there came a banging of barrage guns—bang, bang, bang—with now and then the boo-oom! of a bomb.

While we were waiting there we heard the crash of shrapnel coming through the glass roof. By and by another bunch of shrapnel fell with a fine ringing of metal on the concrete platform alongside the train. No harm done. The raiders passed, the banging and the booming stopped; but there was then no driver and stoker for the train. They had gone with the second load of shrapnel, and we had to wait two hours while they dug up a new crew.

After three and a half hours of deck-pacing on the steamer, and twenty-two hours of sitting up straight in third-class wooden seats, I made the naval base; and late at night though it was, there was a British naval officer at the hotel to let me know I was to report next morning to the British admiral in charge.

This admiral had a reputation in London for having no use for newspaper men. When this staff-officer asked me if I had heard of his admiral before, I told him what I heard in London. "He eats 'em alive," I was told by

a big London journalist, and I repeated that now, of course without naming the journalist.

"And what do you think of that?" asked this staff-officer.

"If he tries to eat me alive I hope he chokes," I answered to that. I figured he would tell his chief that, but there had been so much boot-licking done by a couple of writers over there that, for the honor of the craft, I thought somebody ought to have a wallop at these press crushers once in a while.

This admiral is worth a paragraph, because he was a type. He was a capable man up to his limitations; a good executive, a devotee to duty; but he should have lived before printing-presses were invented. Also he, too, lacked imagination.

He was a man who acted as if priding himself on his brusqueness of language. He sat at his flat desk like a pagan image, never looked up, never said ay, no, or go to the devil when I stepped in and wished him "Good morning!"

I told him what I wanted. I wished to cruise with the American destroyers in their U-boat operations.

His answer was a No! Bing! No, sir!

"Whoops!" I said to myself. "I've come more than 4,000 miles, with a fine expense account to *Collier's*, and I'm turned down before I get going.

I spread before him my credentials—from the department and elsewhere. I spread before him a letter from Colonel Roosevelt, the same in his own handwriting. In France I could have lost my passport and yet got along on that letter. Batteries of inspectors used to sit up and come to life at the sight of a letter in the colonel's own handwriting.

This man did not turn his head to look at what I might have. All the credentials in the world were going to have no influence with him. He repeated his No, putting about seventeen n's in the No!

Then, mildly, I told him that I thought I ought to have something more than a No; that I should have a reason to go with the No. He intimated that he didn't have to give reasons unless he wished to.

I asked him why he should not wish to? Was it not right and fair that he should give a reason? I had come more than 4,000 miles at great expense to *Collier's*, for one thing. For

another—and this more important—there was an anxiety among Americans to know something of the doings of our little destroyer flotilla. They had sailed out into the East, been swallowed up in the mists of the Atlantic—that was the last we had seen of them. They were the first of our forces to come in contact with the enemy. Were they doing good work over here, or were they tied up to a dock in some port and their officers and crews roistering ashore?

Still he said No.

Then I went on to tell him what I had told our own archaic type of admiral in London—with additions: that it was possible that we had in the United States a different idea of the navy from what the British public held; that in our own country a lot of people held the notion that the navy was not the property of the officers, not quite so much as it was the property of the people; and that holding that view, these same people thought themselves entitled to know what that navy was doing to back their faith in it. And perhaps it was not the worst policy in the world to tell them what that navy was doing.

Still he said No.

But why?

Well, for one thing (he was disintegrating a little), in the British service they did not allow civilians of any kind to go to sea with their ships in war time. That further—they allowed no reports of their work at sea to appear in the press.

I pointed out that reports of fine deeds were, nevertheless, appearing in the press; that from the London dailies of the week past I had made clippings of such, and if he cared to see them I would show them to him.

"But we allow no civilians to go cruising with ships at sea in war time. And I will not establish a precedent now."

It was the old fetich—precedent. I thought of judges who used to hang men on precedent. He surely had what is called the mediæval mind, with apologies to that same mediæval age.

I pointed out that conditions in our country and his were not the same. That there were hundreds of thousands of officers and men in the British navy; that those officers and men were regularly ashore on liberty or leave; that

they gossiped, and that hundreds of thousands of officers and men gossiping could pass the word pretty far, especially in a country where there was not a single little hamlet more than 40 miles from tide-water. With us it was different. Our nearest Atlantic port was 3,000 miles from this very naval base; and 3,000 miles farther to the Pacific coast, with no hundreds of thousands of men on liberty ashore. If men like myself were not allowed to tell them something, how were they ever to learn what was doing?

I wound up by telling him he was an autocrat; which disturbed his graven serenity. Autocrat and autocracy were not pleasant-sounding words just then. He snapped his head up, and for the first time looked as if he might be human.

"We have to be autocratic in war time," he barked.

"Not in everything," I barked back.

Then, and not till then, did he soften. We had a little more conversation, and then he said he wanted that night to think over the unprecedented request. He would let me know next day.

A perfect bigot; and yet there were worse than he. He dared to say what he thought about the rights of his station. Some of his judgments may have been childish, but his convictions were deep and honest. I respected him, and later came to have almost a liking for him.

I have expended many paragraphs in telling of this interview, but it is meant to be more than a statement of one American correspondent. It is meant to explain a point of view which Americans may find it hard work to understand. That admiral in charge of our naval base can be multiplied all the world over. We have them in our own departments.

While waiting the admiral's pleasure I had a look at the port. A fine harbor, a beautiful harbor, but disfigured now by big, ugly war-buildings. The houses of the port set mostly up on terraces. There were several streets, but only one real one in the place, and that ran along the waterside. All the pubs of the port were naturally located on this waterside street, and so no tired seafarer had to walk far to get a drink. Not many of our fellows were to be seen on the streets in daylight; but at night they were plentiful. A couple of movie

theatres took care of about three hundred of them; the rest walked the waterside street. There was a port order there that no sailor of ours could stay in a pub after eight in the evening, so at one minute past eight that waterside street looked like a naval parade. For the rest the port offered little or nothing to tempt a man. It was as rainy a place as ever I was in, and the back streets were crowded with children playing. Barefooted, healthy children! If they had not been healthy the weather would surely have killed them off. It was a most moral port, too; too moral for some people, who thought to put a little life into the place by making nightly calls there, and made the nightly calls till a local clergyman protested from the altar, whereupon some muscular young Christians ran the visitors back aboard their train and out of the port's history.

Next day the admiral gave me permission to make a cruise with our destroyers. He seemed to be giving it in the same stubborn fashion that he had at first refused it—as though he saw his duty in so doing. I was told that he said he did not think much of my manners; which, of course, worried me.

I knew quite a few officers in the navy who were commanding destroyers over there. Any one of them, known or unknown to me, was good enough for me as a skipper. No man not ready to take a chance puts in for command of a destroyer over there; and no man not fit is given a command. But I took passage with one that I had cruised with before—the alert, resourceful kind with plenty of nerve. If anything should happen, I knew he would be there with all his crew and his ship had.

What happened while with him and at the naval base I have tried to tell as separate incidents when I can, in the chapters which follow.

ONE THEY DIDN'T GET

WE were one of a group of American destroyers convoying a fleet of inbound British merchant steamers. The messenger handed a radio in to the bridge.

"We are being shelled," said the radio; latitude and longitude followed, as did the name of the ship, *J. L. Luckenbach.* One of us knew her; an American ship of 6,000 tons or so.

Another radio came: "Shell burst in engine-room. Engineer crippled." S O S signals were no rare thing in those waters, but even so they were never passed up as lacking interest; the skipper waited for action. Pretty soon it came, a signal from the senior officer of our group. The 352—let us give that as the number of our ship—was to proceed at once to the assistance of the *Luckenbach.*

The skipper's first act was to shake up the second watch-officer, who also happened to be acting as chief engineer of the ship, and to pass him the word to speed the ship up to

twenty-five knots. We were steaming at the head of the convoy column at eighteen knots at the time. The first watch-officer, having finished his breakfast and a morning watch, was just then taking a little nap on the port ward-room transom with his clothes and sea-boots still on. The active messenger shook him up too. The two officers made the deck together, one buttoning his blouse over a heavy sweater, the other a sheepskin coat over his blouse.

Word was sent to the *Luckenbach* that we were on the way. Within three minutes the radio came back: "Our steam is cut off. How soon can you get here?"

Up through the speaking-tube came a voice just then to say that we were making twenty-five knots. At the same moment our executive officer, who also happened to be the navigator, handed the skipper a slip of paper with the course and distance to the *Luckenbach*, saying: "That was at nine-fifteen."

It was then nine-seventeen. Down the tube to the engine-room went the order to make what speed she could. Also the skipper said: "She ought to be tearing off twenty-eight soon

as she warms up. And she's how far now? Eighty-two miles? Send this radio: 'Stick to it—will be with you within three hours.'"

By this time all hands had an idea of what was doing and all began to brighten up. Men off watch, supposed to be asleep in their cots below, began to stroll up and have a look around decks. Some lingered near the wireless door, and every time the messenger passed they sort of stuck their ears up at him. He was a long-legged lad in rubber boots who took the deck in big strides. His lips never opened, but his eyes talked. The men turned from him with pleased expressions on their faces.

There was a little steel shelter built on to the chart house to port. It was for the protection of the forward gun crew, who had to be ready for action at any minute. Men standing by for action and not getting it legitimately, try to get it in some other way. So they used to burn up their spare energy in arguing. It did not matter what the argument was about—the President, Roosevelt, the Kaiser, the world series—any subject would do so long as it would grow into an argument. The rest of the crew could hear them—threatening to bust

each other's eyes out—clear to the skid deck sometimes. But now all quiet here, and soon they were edging out of their igloo and calling down to the fellows on the main deck: "That right about a ship being shelled by a sub? Yes. Well!" They went down to their shelter smiling at one another.

Ship's cooks, who rarely wander far from their cosey galley stoves, began to show on deck; ward-room stewards came out on deck; a gang black-painting a tank hatch—they all slipped over to the rail and, leaning as far out as they could and not fall overboard, had long looks ahead. And then they all turned to see what 352's smoke-stacks were doing. There was great hope there.

The black smoke was getting blacker and heavier. They were sure feeding the oil to her. The chief came up the engine-room ladder. An old petty officer waylaid him. Doing well, was she, sir?—She was. Hem! About how well, sir?—Damn' well. She was kicking out twenty-eight—twenty-eight good—and picking up.

Twenty-eight and picking up? And the best she showed in her builders' trial was twenty-

nine-one! What d'y' know about her? Some little old packet, hah?

It was a fine day, the one fine day of the trip, a rarely fine day for this part of the northern ocean at this time of year. It was cloudy, but it was calm. There was a long, easy swell on, but no sea to make her dive or pitch. The swell, when she got going in good shape, set her to swinging a little, but that did not hurt. A destroyer just naturally likes to swing a little.

Swinging along she went, rolling one rail down and then the other, but not making it hard to stand almost anywhere around deck, except that when you went aft there was a drive of air that lifted you maybe a little faster than you started out to go. Swinging along she went, a long, easy swing, carrying a long white swash to either side of her, vibrating a thousand to the minute on her fantail, streaming out a long white and pale-blue wake for as far as we could see, and just clear of her taffrail piling up the finest little hill of clear white boiling water.

Twenty-nine, they say, she was making, and still picking up. What! Thirty? And a little

more left in her? What d'y' know—some little baby, hah?

Another radio came to the bridge: "A shell below our water-line. Settling, but still afloat and still fighting."

"Good work. Stick to it," they said on the bridge, and wondered whether it was the skipper or the radio man who was framing the messages. He had the dramatic instinct, whoever he was.

Perhaps twenty minutes later came: "Water in our engine-room."

And then: "Fire in our forehold, but will not surrender. Look for our boats."

And: "They are now shooting at our antennæ."

Radios to the bridge are not posted up for the crew to gossip over, but there was no keeping that last one under cover.

"Shelling their attenay? Well, the mortifying dogs! Whatever you do, don't let 'em get your attenay, old bucket."

Our thirty-knot clip was eating up the road. We were getting near the spot. The canvas caps came off the guns, and the gun crews were told to load and stand by. A chief gunner's

mate was told to make ready his torpedo-tubes. He was a famous torpedo-man. He would stay up all night with an ailing gyro or hydrostatic piston and not even ask to sleep in next morning for a reward, and he had a record of making nothing but hits at torpedo-practice. But he had been glum all the trip. He had stayed past the legal hour on liberty the last time in, and the shore patrol had come along and scooped him up. A court-martial was coming to him and so he had been glum; but not now. He went around decks smiling, with a little steel thing that looked like a wrist-bag but wasn't. It held the keys to the magazines.

Pretty soon he had torpedo-tubes swinging inboard and outboard, and between every pair of tubes a man sitting up in an iron seat that looked like the kind that goes with a McCormick reaper, which all helped the gunner's mate to feel better. He stopped ten seconds to tell the story of the new gun-crew man who was sent up the yard to the storekeeper for a pair of spurs to ride the torpedo-tubes with.

There were four guns, one forward, one aft, and two in the waist. They had been slushed down with vaseline to keep the salt-water rust

Our thirty-knot clip was eating up the road. We were getting near the spot.

off; now they were swabbing the grease off. Grease on the outside of a gun does not affect the shooting of the inside, but a gun ought naturally to look slick going into action.

Trainers and pointers stood beside their loaded guns, and other members of the gun crew held up shells, the noses of the shells stuck into the deck mat and the butts resting against the young chests of the gun crews as they stood in line. There was a nineteen-year-old lad who, when I knew him two years before, was doing boy's work in the Collier bookbindery. Now he was a gun-captain standing handy to his little pet and trying not to look too proud when he peeked up toward where I was.

The foretop reported smoke on the horizon ahead. That would be on the *Luckenbach.* And where she was the U-boat was. The forward gun was trained a point to right of the smoke.

One senior watch-officer, now in the foretop, called down that he could now see the ship. Smoke was coming out of her hull. Soon he reported shells splashing alongside of her. Those would be from the U-boat. Soon we all could see the ship from the bridge.

The foretop then reported the U-boat. She was almost dead ahead. She could not be seen from the bridge, but, directed by the foretop, the gun was trained on the horizon dead ahead; 11,000 yards was the range. The gun was one of the latest type—only a 4-inch—but a great little gun just the same.

"Train and fire," said the skipper. Bo-o-m! it went, flame and smoke. We could not see the splash from the bridge, nor could they in the foretop. It probably dropped beyond the submarine, which soon we could see—a pretty big fellow she looked with two guns. She had been shelling the ship even while we were running up, and as our first shot boomed out she let go another shell. We expected her to send a couple our way—she probably carried bigger guns than we did—but she did not; she let go another at the steamer. "Maybe at the antennæ," said a chief quartermaster on the bridge.

We shortened our range. The gun was trained and ready for firing when a sea rolled up on us. The ocean was smooth enough, but the swell was still on—a long swell of the kind that does not sputter, but walk right up and

announce their arrival by arriving. This long blue swell rolled up to our bow.

We were doing thirty knots and at thirty knots a little ship doesn't need a masthead sea to get action. We went into it head first. It came right on over our bow, over our foc'sle head, over the forward gun. The shield to the forward gun stood probably six feet above the foc'sle deck. That wave rolled right over the gun-shield.

There was a C. P. O. standing quite close to the shield. He grabbed a vertical rod on the outside of the shield, and just managed to hook in the fingers of one hand. The sea, all white and solid, rolled over the gun and the shield. The C. P. O. was swept off his feet, but he was a stubborn one and hung on. Behind him was the officer in charge of the firing. When he saw that sea rolling up there was nothing near but the C. P. O., so he grabbed the C. P. O. with both hands around the waist. He too was swept off his feet, but he hung on—to the C. P. O. They both floated flat out on the white roller, and the white roller went smash-o! up against the chart house.

The chart house was just under the bridge,

and the glass windows had been taken out from the bridge railing so that they would not be smashed by the concussion of the forward gun. We were leaning out of these open spaces, just getting ready to laugh at the people below when, swabbo! up the side of the chart house and through the open spaces and into our open mouths came the wash of the sea.

Another wave followed that one, but not quite so high. As soon as it passed the forward gun was trained and fired. We had been making great leaps ahead all this time—the range now was under 9,000 yards. The foretop reported it short.

The U-boat was still there. We still expected her to send one our way. But nothing doing for us. She sent another shell toward the steamer. The steamer had quit firing. No use. The U-boat had simply taken position beyond range of the steamer's guns and leisurely as she pleased was shelling her. Our third shell landed close to the sub. And then down she went and wasted no time at it. Before we could train and fire again she was gone.

The sub, as we learned later, had landed fifteen shells into the steamer and wounded

nine of her people, of whom three were of the bluejacket gun crew.

One young bluejacket had been hit twice. He was carrying a shell to the gun when he caught the second one—a piece of flying shell in his shoulder. He laid his own shell on the deck to see how about it, and got hit again; this time in what our navy calls the stern sheets. That made him mad. He shook his fist toward the sub. "No damn' German's going to hit me three times and get away with it." He grabbed his shell off the deck and slammed it into the gun-breech. "Hand it to 'em, Joe!" he yelled to the gun-pointer. Joe did his best, but he didn't have the gun—the shot splashed where most of them had, about half a mile short of the sub.

Still pouring the black smoke out of our funnels, we leaped toward the *Luckenbach* and hailed her through the megaphone when we breasted her. She hailed back that she had water in her afterhold and fire in her forehold, and gave us the number of her wounded. Two of the three wounded bluejackets were injured seriously. We could see them stretched out under the gun.

We were steaming around the *Luckenbach* at twenty knots while we were hailing: this in case the sub took it in her head to pop up again and catch us slowed down. We did slow down and stop when it came time to clear away a whaleboat and send it over to the steamer with our senior watch-officer and the surgeon, with the needful surgical supplies.

We continued to steam circles around the steamer all the time they were aboard, with our lookouts keeping eyes skinned for the U-boat. By her manner of shelling the steamer after he had opened fire our skipper judged she was a tough one. She did show once while we were circling the *Luckenbach*. Her periscope popped up about a mile abeam of us. It may have popped up again—it was getting to be a nice little choppy sea good for sub work and no saying that it was not—but we only sighted it once, and then it did not linger.

The sea was growing lumpy when the whaleboat came bouncing back with our senior officer. It was right about the *Luckenbach* having nine injured, but all would get well. The doctor was looking after them. She was a cotton steamer. The kid who had been hit twice was

all right. He was walking around deck with his cap over his port ear and proud as Billy-be-Damn'—three times wounded by German shell fire and got away with it!

The fire in the forehold? Most of it was from two old mattresses—at least that was all he found.

"Did you put the fire out?"

"Yes, sir. The steamer's crew were too tired to do any more hustling around to put any fire out, so we got out a hose and put it out."

"How about that bulkhead?" asked the skipper. "He hailed that he didn't think it would stand the strain of steaming."

"Maybe so, sir, but I don't agree with him. I don't see how that bulkhead's going to cave in with all those bales of cotton jammed up against it. What the most of them over there are suffering from is the reaction from that three hours of shelling—everything was looking pretty blue to them, sir."

"Can he make steam?"

"Yes, sir. Their engineer has two ribs busted in and a piece of shrapnel in his neck and part of his foot shot away. But he's all right. He was lying down when I first saw

him, cursing the Germans blue. Then he says: 'Put me on my feet, men.' A couple of oilers put him on his feet. I thought he was going to give orders to make steam, but he only wanted to be stood up so as he could curse the Germans a little better. Lying down interfered with his wind. He rolled it out in one steady stream for ten minutes. He was an Italian, or maybe a Spaniard, and his English wasn't perfect, but he could talk like hell. He's all right. He'll get steam up, sir."

By and by they did make steam and begin to move on a course our skipper wigwagged to them. The skipper left the surgeon aboard, and at twenty knots the 352 steamed more circles around the steamer, all lookouts meanwhile skinning their eyes afresh for signs of the sub. We could make out a lot of smoke on the southern horizon. It was the convoy we had left in the morning. An hour later the *Luckenbach* found her legs.

Our cripple broke no records for speed, but she was making revolutions, and by five o'clock we rejoined the convoy with her alongside.

So here is an eight hours' log for the 352: At nine in the morning she was responding to

S O S-ing ninety miles away; at five in the afternoon we had her tucked away for the night in the column.

The tall quartermaster came up on the bridge to stand his watch. We were in our regular position, at the head of the column at twenty knots. He looked back at the fleet. "There you are, Lucky Bag. They must have had you checked up and counted in, a big ship and a three-million-dollar cargo, this morning, and here you are to-night—one they didn't get."

THE DOCTOR TAKES CHARGE

EVERY American destroyer over here rates a young surgeon. What some of these surgeons don't know about seagoing can be found in about six hundred pages of Knight's "Modern Seamanship," but that does not matter much. Let them look after the casualties; there are capable young naval officers to look after the seagoing end.

Most of these young surgeons have a taste for adventure. If they had not, they would not be over here. The 352 drew one, born and raised in a Southern State. Before coming over here he had viewed the Atlantic once or twice from a distance, which did not quite content him. His ancestors must have crossed that same Atlantic to get to America, and somewhere within him was a high-pitched string that vibrated to every thrill of that same ocean now.

He used to speak of these things in the smoking-room of the King's Hotel here, which is where every destroyer officer comes at least

once between cruises to get a—cup of coffee. He would have liked to make a few sea voyages when he was a little younger, but if a fellow is ever going to amount to anything he has to settle down sometime and become a respectable member of society—so his folks were always saying, and so he took up medicine. He liked his profession. A doctor can do a heap of good in a suffering world—especially if people will only let him. But so many people want a young doctor to be experienced before they ever will call him in! "Get experience," they say; and not a doggone one in a dozen'll ever give a fellow any chance to get the experience. "What the most of 'em want is for some one else to give us the experience." He did as well as the next young doctor, but at times he would grow almost melancholy sitting before the smoking-room fire telling of his waiting for business in his home town.

He was not at all melancholy by nature. He could keep the ward-room mess ringing with darky stories on a quiet night in port. His messmates called him Doc; and when the ship was at sea they were all glad to see him on the bridge studying things out. He had plenty of

time for that. In two cruises his only cases were one quartermaster, who got hove across the bridge and broke his nose, and a gunner's mate who broke his leg by being bounced out of his bunk one windy night. They were a disgustingly healthy lot, these destroyer crews.

But he felt pleased just to be out to sea. These high hills of moving water sure did give a little ship heaps of action sometimes. He would watch them from the bridge. He would watch the officer of the watch too, and the man at the wheel, and the lookouts with their eyes skinned for U-boats, and the signal quartermasters balanced on the flying bridge and sending their messages in a jumping sea-way. He would go down to the chart house with the navigator and stand by to pass him dividers and parallels. He would stop to sigh when he thought that if somebody had only tipped him off in time he might have gone to Annapolis and right now be a young naval officer dashing around on one of these same destroyers. Still, being a surgeon on one of them wasn't too bad. If they had a battle or anything, a ship's doctor wasn't going to be too far away.

It was in his third cruise that the 352 got

the S O S which resulted in the rescue of the big steamer spoken of. There had been other S O S's—any number of them—but this time there was something doing for our young doctor. When she signalled that nine of her people had been wounded by shell and shrapnel fire, and the 352's skipper ordered a deck officer and a whale-boat away, he also told Doc to break out his medical gear and go along. Doc already had his surgical gear ready; from the first word of the shelling he had gone below, and now everything was laid out ready for action on the ward-room transom.

Over to the ship they went, all hands in life-vests, and while the deck officer of the 352 was cross-questioning the captain and engineer, and looking around to see how much damage had been done and so on, Doc was rigging up an operating-table between the chart house and the chart deck rail, slinging the table in sort of hammock style so that when the ship rolled she would not roll his patients overboard.

Doc was no mean little operator. The great danger to most of the wounded men was of infection. One after the other, he had his cases

up, asked about four questions, had about four looks, and went to it. No knowing that the U-boat might pop up again and try a few more shells, or that a bulkhead would not give way, or a boiler blow up when they tried to make steam below. No knowing; no.

Up they came to his swinging table, where Doc took a probe, poked into the wound, wrapped cotton around the probe, soaked it in iodine, jabbed it in, twisted it around, swabbed it out, dressed it down, slapped the patient on the chest, said "Next," and did it all over again.

"Next! You'd think it was a blessed barber's shop," Doc heard one of them say. Only he was an officer—by the back of his head Doc knew it—some of them would have told him what they thought of his rapid-fire action. But it was no time for canoodling—it was war, and they were all rated as grown men and so able to stand a few little painful touches.

One terribly wounded patient gave him worry. On him Doc worked with great care. He was working on him, all the others being attended to, when the 352's deck officer came to say that he was going back to the destroyer

to report. "The captain of this ship wants to abandon her," said the deck officer.

"Abandon ship and we will never be able to get this man I got here now off her—not in this sea, sir," said Doc. "And if he's left alone for two hours, he'll sure die."

"I'll signal what the skipper says." The officer went off with his crew in the whale-boat, leaving a hospital steward and a signal quartermaster to stay with the doctor.

Doc was working away on his hard case when his quartermaster came to say that the 352 had signalled that they were to stay aboard and that the steamer was to get under way and steer a course south half east magnetic.

The doctor, without looking up, said: "All right."

"Shall I tell the steamer's captain, sir?"

This time Doc looked up. "Why, of course, tell him. Why not? Why do you ask me that?"

"You are the ranking naval officer aboard here, sir. I take orders from you now, sir."

For about four seconds Doc neglected his patient. That was so; so he was.

"Yes, tell the captain."

The quartermaster ran up the bridge ladder. Doc gazed over the chart-rail down to the deck, up and around on the ship. "Doggone!" he breathed. "I am the ranking—I'm the only naval officer present." Then he shook his head and bent to his patient. He might have the rank, but the last thing he was going to do was to butt in on any regular ship's officers.

The disabled ship went on to her new course, south half east magnetic, with the destroyer steaming twenty-knot circles around her. And late in the afternoon they made the convoy. By night she was tucked in the rear of twenty other ships, the doctor and his emergency staff still aboard. They were to remain aboard until the steamer made port.

That same night something happened. On the steamer they did not know just what it was. They saw a column of white, a column of black—those who happened to be looking—another column of white, from the big ship of the fleet. And then dark came. There were radios flying about, but they were code messages and the radio man could not decode them because the first thing the steamer captain had done that morning when it looked as though

the U-boat was going to make them take to the boats was to heave the code-books overboard. In the morning they would know.

Morning came, but with it not a ship in sight. Of twenty ships and a group of destroyers the night before, not one now. It was his signal-officer who thought it out first. "U-boats thick last night, sir, and the convoy must 'a' got orders to disperse or else change course," he said to the doctor.

"That sounds like good dope to me too." He turned to the steamer's captain. "Where were you bound, sir?"

"To Havre."

The doctor could see nothing else but to proceed to Havre, and on a zigzag course. The old captain did not know about the zigzagging; he had never done any zigzagging and did not know why he should now—besides, it mixed his reckoning all up.

The doctor said he would fix the zigzagging part of it, and, telling his hospital steward to have a special eye out for the very sick man, went into the chart house and proceeded to explain the zigzagging stuff. He paused to recall all he had ever learned while elbowing

the 352's navigator over the chart-table; also the answers he had got to his questions while so doing.

You steer 45 degrees off the course you really want to make for so many minutes and then you steer 90 degrees from that for the same number of minutes back toward the course you really want to make—see, so—and that gives so many minutes to the good—see. That was one way.

"How many minutes?" asked the captain.

Doc had to stop and think that over. "Twice the square of the total minutes—no, no. Take twice the sum of the squares of the minutes on the two legs—and get the square root and then you have the hypothenuse of the two sides of the triangle; that is, you have the number of minutes' steaming you make good on your real course."

The old skipper knew nothing of square roots or hypothenuses or anything that looked like 'em, and he had always laid his course out by compass points.

"All right," said Doc, and after a while laid out the zigzag courses in compass points.

The old fellow did not quite like it, so all that day Doc alternated between his bad pa-

tient and the bridge to keep the skipper reassured about the zigzagging. Also he urged the crew to have a special watch out for U-boats.

That night Doc and the seasoned signal quartermaster stood alternate watches on the bridge. Doc would take a nap; the quartermaster would take a nap; between them they were figuring to keep a sort of official navy lookout. There were ship's crew men on the lookout too, but the reaction from the shelling had set in. Doc used to find them asleep in the bridge wings.

Just before dawn of the second morning Doc saw a shadow looming on their starboard bow. He had another look. It was another steamer —a big one. She was drawing nearer. "See that?" he called to the man at the wheel.

"See what?" sort of drowsed out the man at the wheel.

The trusty quartermaster from the 352 was getting a wink under the bridge-rail. Doc yelled to him, at the same time grabbing up the megaphone and roaring into the night air: "Where you-all going? Where the devil you-all going? Can't you-all see where you're going? Keep off—keep off."

"Can't *you* see where you're going?—keep off yourself."

By that time the signal quartermaster was awake and bounding across the bridge. He grabbed the wheel and began to spin it around. The ship's bow turned. Doc saw the big hulk go by him in the dark.

"Good work," said Doc. "How'd you spot him so quick?"

"I didn't spot him, sir. I don't see him yet. I went by the sound of his voice."

"Special little angel perched up aloft to look out for Jack when at sea—" sang Doc. "I thought that was a nursery rhyme. Now I know it's true. Between you and me, quartermaster, we'll get this ship to port yet."

They finished that night and the next day without seeing anything or having anything happen. Nothing except the argument about the forward compartment.

Among the shells which had come aboard the steamer was one which had punched a fine big hole in her bow. The ship's crew had put a plug there which worked all right till the ship took to rolling, which it did this day. The hole was just at the water-line. Before they knew

anything about it there was the plug gone and the water up to a man's knees in the forward compartment. Doc said it should be stopped.

The old skipper wanted to know who was going to stop it. His crew? No, sir. He wouldn't ask any of 'em to go down there—besides, they wouldn't go. They were all used up since the battle with the U-boat. It made no difference if the ship sank. He'd had so much trouble that trip anyway that he wasn't too sure he wouldn't just as soon see her sink. He wasn't too sure they wouldn't all be better off in the boats. The U-boat had ordered them into the boats, and, only the destroyer had come along when it did, they would 'a' taken to the boats, and then they'd 'a' been picked up and no more watches or ships or holes in the for'ard compartment to worry about.

There was nothing left but for Doc to call for volunteers from among the gun crew. They were bluejackets, and their only complaint on the trip had been that the U-boat's guns had outranged their guns. They volunteered in a body—even the three wounded members. Doc took all the sound ones and went down

into the forward compartment with a mattress and some scantling he found in the hold. The water was by then about up to the men's waists. It was hard, cold work, but they got it done—the mattress stuffed into the hole and the scantling shoring it up. It still leaked, but not much—a little auxiliary steam in there at intervals did not quite keep her dried out, but it kept her head above water, so that was all right. All that day she was a lone steamer plugging her halting way over a wide sea. Seven knots was her speed, and all hands tickled to be making that because of weak places showing from time to time in her steam department—damages by shell fire which they did not appreciate properly at first.

They were nearing the coast of France. They would have to make a landfall soon, and running without lights, as they were, made things hard, so the old skipper began to talk to Doc. If the doctor didn't mind, he would take full charge of the ship himself. She was a big ship with a three-million-dollar cargo, and if anything happened her, the owners would naturally look to him, the master, for it.

Doc thought it was a pretty cool way to wash

out all record of what his little force had done, but he also recognized the old fellow's position. "It sounds reasonable," said Doc, "but I think you ought to give me an idea of what you're going to do."

"There's been no sun for a sight these two days, but we were here"—he made a new dot over an old one on the chart—"and logging so many knots to-day noon we ought to be"—he made another dot—"about here now."

"How about the tides?"

"The tides? Oh, yes! Well, I don't know about the tides. You see, I never made a port in France before."

"You didn't?"

There was a coast chart-book in the rack. Doc took it down and began to read it. He made regular trips down to see how his wounded patient was getting on, but always hurried back to his coast chart-book. Interesting things in chart-books—he used to read them aboard the destroyer.

That night the first mate came up on the bridge. Doc asked him what kind of a light he expected to pick up. The mate told him. Doc thought he was wrong, and said so.

Well, that was the light the old man had said they would make. Where was he now? Asleep, and Lord knows he needed it.

Doc did not wake him up. He had argued enough with him, but he didn't think the old man had allowed for the tides, and if anything happened there would be no more arguments—he would just assert his rank and take charge of the ship.

Doc went below, gave his worst wounded patient a night potion and saw him to sleep. He also went down to see the chief engineer, who had been wounded three times—once in the head. The Doc talked to him awhile—he was inclined to rave—gave him a half-grain jolt of morphine and saw him to sleep. He told the signal quartermaster that he had better have a nap before he dropped in his tracks.

"But the night-watches, sir?"

"We'll leave the night-watches to the ship's crew and Providence. The watch may sleep on the job, but the Lord won't—at least I hope not. Anyway, I know I'm doggone tired," said Doc, and turned in.

Doc could have slept longer—about twenty-four hours longer, he thought, when he found

himself awake. It was a sort of grinding under the ship which had wakened him.

By his illuminated wrist-watch he saw that it was three o'clock—three in the afternoon, he hoped. But it wasn't. It was three in the morning. He had been asleep two hours.

He went on deck just as his signal-officer came to tell him the ship was ashore.

Doc found the old man and the mate looking over charts under a hand-light in the chart house. "I could 'a' bet we'd 'a' picked up that other light," the old man was saying.

"The bettin' part don't explain it," said the mate. "A fine place to be high and dry and a U-boat come along in the morning and plunk us another few shells between our livers and lights. I'm tired of keeping my mind on U-boats."

That was when Doc horned in on the old skipper. "I been pretty easy with you-all. You ought to been twenty miles farther east. You listened to me and you-all would have been. Look here"—he hauled down the chart-book and showed them. "And now I'll take charge."

It was low tide when she ran on to the beach.

With the flood-tide and the engines kicking back they had her off at daylight. After that, with Doc on the bridge, everything seemed to go all right. The mate said he must have come over the side with a medicine-chest full of horseshoes. By eleven o'clock next morning they were taking on a pilot outside Havre.

Havre is a regular French port with jetties leading down from the heart of the residential places almost. The people, seeing her coming, she bearing the evident marks of her late battle, crowded down to greet her. About five minutes was enough for her story to circulate. The bluejacket gun crew, being in uniform, caught their eyes first. They cheered them, the brav' Américains. And then the wounded came. Oh, the pity! Three or four of the wounded, who had all that day been cavorting around deck, saw the dramatic values and assumed most languid poses. Oh, the great pity! Whereat two more almost fainted.

The worst wounded one—there was no pretense about him—had to be carried down the gang-plank. Doc went with him. Good nursing was what he needed; and he was going to see that he got it.

He got it in the port hospital; and then Doc and his two assistants turned in and slept sixteen hours by Doc's illuminated wrist-watch.

After cabling and getting his orders, Doc headed for his base. Their journey back by train and steamer—the two men in dungarees and life-vests, and Doc in sea-boots and one of those sheepskin coats they wear on destroyers—was noteworthy but not seagoing, so it is passed up here.

Doc made his port. We met him in the King's Hotel smoke-room, and he told us all about it. We had had it already from the quartermaster and the hospital steward, but Doc was to have a little touch of his own.

"There she was, a little down by the head, but safe in port," concluded Doc; "and while I was waiting for my orders I had a look around the place. There was a little square there with little cafés all around the square, and I sat in front of one of them and had my coffee."

"So this was France," I kept saying to myself. All my life I had been reading more or less about France, and it used to be a sort of dream to me to be thinking I might some day get there. And there I was—only a little corner

of France, but it was France, and a pretty sunny little place after our week to sea.

"And while I sat there people came up and looked me over. I thought it was my needing a shave, but it wasn't. I had my cap on, and by my cap they knew me for the officer of the heroes of the ship. After a while they came up and spoke to me. I didn't get quite what they were all saying, but I was one brave man—we were all brave men, there was no doubt about that part. When they all got through one little girl came up and gave me a bunch of flowers."

He pulled out some kind of a faded flower and sighed. "She was about eight years old."

"No use talking," I said, "it's a great life." And the quartermaster—he stood with his signal-flags sticking out under his armpit—said:

"Yes, sir, a great life if we don't weaken."

"What's there to weaken about? Something doing every doggone minute since we left our ship."

THE 343 STAYS UP

MOST shore-going people, after a look at a fleet of our destroyers, would not mark them high up for safe ships. They are too long and slim and floppety-like.

But no one can tell their officers and crews anything like that. They have tried them out and know. You take a destroyer in a ninety-mile breeze of wind, put her stern to it, give her five or six knots' headway, and there she'll lay till the North Atlantic blows dry.

And that is not their only quality. Speed, of course; but not that either. They have a way of staying up after being cut up. There was that one which was of the first to cross over for the U-boat hunting game. One dark night she was struck amidships by a 2,000-ton British sloop-of-war. In crowded quarters and steaming without lights those little collisions are bound to occur.

This one was hit amidships—bam!—and amidships is a bad place for a destroyer to be

hit—her big engine and boiler-room compartment lie amidships.

This one of ours was hit so hard that nobody aboard ever thought she would stay up. She did go down till her deck was flush with the water's edge, but there she stayed; and her crew, climbing back aboard, took a hawser from the sloop-of-war, which towed her back to port. She was a fine heartening sight coming in. If she could come back, why worry about minor mishaps?

One of them—the 343 say—had performed her duty, which was to see a small convoy to a point well on toward a large port, and was returning to the naval base.

She was in no great rush, and, it happening to be smooth water, which is a rare thing up this way at this time of the year, she stopped for a little needed gun practice.

There was no more thought than usual of U-boats. Nobody would have been surprised if one popped up—it was a coast where they had been regularly operating—but no one was particularly expecting one.

Destroyers are bad medicine if you do not get to them quickly, and lately the U-boats

seemed to care more to get merchant ships; but this day the lookouts were not loafing on their job on that account.

The 343 got through with her target practice, and, except for a few gunners' mates still coddling their pet guns, the crew were taking it easy around deck; and also, because of the smooth sea, the ship was making easy weather of it toward port.

Seeing a periscope is oftentimes a matter of luck. When they stay up it is easy enough, but when they are porpoising, shooting it up for just a look around, you have to be looking right at one. What they first saw on the 343 was the wake of this torpedo, coming on at a forty-knot clip for the waist of the ship.

The commander of the 343 was on the bridge at the time and saw the wake almost with the cry of the lookout. The wake was then pretty handy to the ship, and the torpedo itself would be fifty feet or so ahead of the wake.

There was no getting away from it then. The only hope was to take it somewhere else than amidships. Engine and boiler compartments were amidships. If it struck her there they might as well call it taps for all hands.

So the commander put the wheel hard over—to take it on his quarter, where there was also a chance that it would pass under her.

Torpedoes generally strike twelve to fifteen feet under water, but just before this one could make the 343 it broached—came to the surface of the water—but without slacking her forty-knot speed. It was unusual and spectacular. The sun shone on the polished sides of her as she leaped from the sea.

She struck the 343 above her water-line and pretty well aft. Those on her deck who saw her make that last leap out of water hoped for the best, though waiting for the worst. But the resulting explosion was nothing tremendous—so officers and men say, and so adding a little more data to U-boat history. The bark of one of their own little 4-inch guns was more impressive. There was a flame and an up-shooting cloud of black smoke, followed instantly by another explosion, that of their own depth charges, of which there were two of 300 pounds each in the stern. Those who had any thoughts about it at the time were sure that if the torpedo did not get them the depth charges would.

When they went to look they found that thirty-odd feet of the after end of their ship had been blown clean off. The torpedo had hit them on the port side, and the wreckage was hanging from the starboard quarter. Of the after gun only the base was left; they never did see any of the rest of it. The gunner's mate, one of those men who love to keep a gun in shape, was swabbing it out at the time, and they never saw anything of him again.

The chief petty officers' quarters were farthest aft on the 343. The after bulkhead to their compartment was blown in, leaving the inside of the ship open to sea and sun. Fourteen men were in there at the time, lounging around or in their bunks. Many of them were bruised and all were shook up, but they all made the deck. They do not know how they made it, but they did. The after hatchway to the deck was closed with tumbling wreckage, so they must have gone up the midship hatch.

One man taking a nap in the cot bunk farthest aft had a part of the bulkhead blown past him. It cut off a corner of his cot and broke one of his legs, and blew him into the passageway in passing. Landing in the passageway

he sprained his other ankle. He is not quite sure how he made the deck without help, but he did make it, and he says he beat some of them to it at that.

The man who was working on the after gun with the gunner's mate who was blown up, saw the shining torpedo leaping in the sun and heading straight for his part of the ship. If he did not do something he knew he was in for it, so he began to take long high leaps forward. The explosion came while he was in the air on his third long high jump. All he remembers happening to him after that was of an ocean of water flowing over him, and he not minding it at all. When he came to, the doctor was looking him over for broken bones, but did not find any. After the doctor left him he sat up and said: "I bet I've been as near to a torpedo exploding and getting away with it as anybody in the world, hah?" And "Yes," said one of his shipmates, "and I bet you made a world's record for three long high jumps, without a run, too. You sure did travel, boy."

When it was all over the two propeller shafts were still sticking out astern, one naked and shining in the sun; the other also shining and

naked, but with a propeller still in place on it. Spotting that, the skipper ordered the engines turned. To their delight the shaft revolved, the ship began to move. No record-breaking pace, but—God love the builder of a good little ship—she was making revolutions. The wreckage hanging from her starboard quarter acted as a rudder, and so, instead of going straight ahead, she began to go round in circles.

She continued to make circles, and her officers and men stood to stations and waited for what next would happen. Destroyer people have it that there are grades of U-boat commanders—some of nerve, some only ordinary. The U-boat man with nerve enough to attack a destroyer is a good one. He will bear watching; so what they expected was to see this U-boat come up and finish the job. If she did come up and at the right place to get another torpedo in, then the 343 was in for a bad time. So they waited, some thinking one thing, and some another, but all agreeing that the odds were against them.

The U-boat did show again. They saw her conning-tower slipping through the water at about 1,500 yards. The skipper of the 343

was ready in so far as he could be ready with his poor little cripple. Crews were at gun stations, and that conning-tower had hardly got above the surface when two of the 343's guns cut loose at it. They got in four shots, the fourth one pretty handy. But no more. She submerged to the discouragement of one earnest gun-pointer. He leaned against the breech of his little 4-inch to say: "One more and I'd 'ave got her. Bet you me next month's pay that I get her if she shows for two shots again."

She did not show again, but her not showing did not end the 343's troubles. They could steam in circles, but it was not getting them anywhere. A few miles away was one of the roughest shores in the world, the kind where green seas piled up against rocky cliffs—and a tide that was already setting them toward it. A bad enough place in any kind of weather, but with wind and sea making, and this time of year!

It was about two in the afternoon they were torpedoed. By dark they were being driven by the tide and white-capped seas to the shore. They had one hope left. Their radio

operator had managed to keep the radio gear in commission, and through all their troubles he had been sending out S O S calls, though not with too great hope that anybody would come in time. The U-boats had been pretty active thereabout, and it was not on any main sea route. There was always the chance, of course, that some war-ships would be somewhere near.

For one hour, two hours, three, four, five, six hours they drifted. Their wireless kept going out of commission, and their radio operator kept patching it up and getting it going again. S O S—he never let up with that call. It was midnight when a British mine-sweeper bore down and hailed. By then they could hear the high seas breaking on the rocks abeam. The Britisher got the word across the wind, and tried to pass a messenger—a light line, that is—across to the 343. They did not make it. They tried again and again, but no use. The 343 was then within a few hundred yards of the breakers.

The skipper of the Britisher then hailed that he would try to get a boat to them. They could hear him calling for volunteers to man the boat. He got the volunteers, and without

being able to see every detail of it in the dark, the 343's people knew what was happening. They were making a lee of the trawler so as to get the boat over. But the boat was swashing in and out against the side of the ship—up on a sea and then bang! in against the side of the ship. Merely as a sporting proposition, their own lives not depending on it, the 343's people would have been praying for that boat to get safely away.

The boat managed at last to get away from the side of the mine-sweeper, and in time, pitching down on the rollers, they made out to heave a line aboard the 343. And on the deck of the 343 they were right there to grab it and bend it on to a hawser. Fine. Off went the mine-sweeper after she had taken her boat aboard, tugging heartily. She tugged too heartily for the length and size of the hawser. It parted.

They did it all over again—the lowering the boat in the rough sea, the passing the line, the bending on of the bigger line, the attempt to tow. And again it parted. Wouldn't that test men's faith in their good luck? The 343 thought so. Once more tried it, and once more

it parted, but this time not parting until they were far enough off the beach to be safe till daylight.

At daylight a British sloop-of-war came along with a real big hawser and gave them a real tow to our naval base. A group of us were steaming out with a fleet of merchantmen to sea as she was being towed in. Our fellows would have liked to turn out to give her a little cheer, also to inquire into the details of her mishap, but we had to keep on going, and wait until our return to port after a cruise to have a look at her.

She was in dry dock when we got back to port, and the most smashed-up-looking object that any of us had ever seen come in from sea. The wonder was how she ever stayed up long enough to make port. That gaping after end open to sea and sky, and the bare propeller shaft sticking out from the insides of her—she sure did look like she needed nursing! They agreed that they were a lucky bunch to get her home.

One poor fellow was killed—a wonder there were not more—and all hands were sorry for him; but tragedy and comedy so often bunk

together, and men who adventure are more apt to dwell on the humorous than the tragic side of things. There was that about the code-books. The instructions to all ships are to get rid of the code-books if there is ever any likelihood of the enemy capturing the ship. The code-books are bound in thick lead covers. They are kept in a steel box, and altogether they weigh—I do not know, I never lifted them—but some say they weigh 150, some say 200 pounds. After the 343 was torpedoed, an ensign grabbed up the code-book chest, tossed it onto his shoulder, and waltzed out of the ward-room passage and onto deck with it. You would think it was a feather pillow he was dancing off with. When the danger of capture was over our young ensign hooked his fingers into the chest handles to waltz back with it. But nothing doing. It took two of them to carry it back, and they did not trip lightly down any passageway with it either, proving once again that there are times when a man is stronger than at other times.

After the 343 made port the injured were handed over to the sick bay of the flag-ship. There were two of them who must have been

pretty handy to the storm centre of the explosion. At least, it took two young surgeons on the flag-ship all of one day to pick the gun-cotton out of their backs.

There was another man. The doctors, when they came to look him over, found the print of a perfect circle on the fleshiest part of his anatomy. It was so deeply pressed in that the blue and yellow flesh bulged out all around from it. The doctors said it must have been made by a wash-basin being blown against him as he ran up the ladder to the deck. But the man himself knew better than that. "Excuse me, doctor," he said, "but it was nothing so light and soft as a wash-basin hit me. It was something more solid and bigger than that. It was the water-cooler, and I didn't run up any ladder—I was blown up."

The destroyer people have great faith in the durability of their little ships. They are slim-built, and not much thicker in the plates than seven pages of the Sunday paper—they know that, but maybe that is their safety. There is no getting a fair wallop at them. They evade the issue. One man compared them to a hot-water bottle. Try to swat a loaded hot-water

bottle. And what happens? "When you poke it in one place don't it bulge out in another to make up for it? Sure it does. And how do you account for that other one we were talking about? A couple o' years ago—the one that had her stern cut off so that the men in the after compartment leaned out where the bulkhead had been, but wasn't then, and chinned themselves up to the deck from the outside? And how do you account for her bouncing along at twenty knots or more in a gale of wind and a rough sea, and nothing happening them? Get shook up—yes. But they come home, don't they? They sure do. Maybe it's luck, but also maybe it's the way they're thrown together—loose and limber-like."

Whatever it is, they are dashing in and out over there on their job of convoying merchant ships and hunting U-boats. They expect to get their bumps, and they do; but so long as they get an even break they are not kicking. The chart-house gang on the 343 say that they are satisfied they get an even break all right. If she did not fill her little three-straight that time then nobody ever did get any cards in the draw.

They were sticking a new stern onto the 343 when I left the naval base. When they get it well glued on she is going out again. Maybe that same U-boat—you can't always tell, some people have luck—maybe that same U-boat will come drifting her way again. And if they see her first—pass the word for the gun crews!

THE CARGO BOATS

I HAVE spoken earlier of meeting cargo boats—tramp steamers, we call them at home—while crossing the Atlantic. In peace times a fellow would naturally expect to see them here, or almost anywhere else on the wide ocean; but to see them in these war days was to set a man wondering about them.

Wondering, because more than 90 per cent of U-boat sinkings are of ships of less than 12 knots' speed; which means that these rusty old junk heaps, wheezing along at maybe 9 or 10, but more likely at 7 or 8 knots, furnish most of the sinkings. They surely must be having great old times getting by the U-boats, and their captains and crews must surely have a view-point of their own!

At this naval base of which I have been writing, you could look almost any day and see 5, 10, or 20 of these cargo boats to moorings. And ashore was a pub—there were other pubs, plenty of them—but to this one particular pub

came bunches of these cargo captains to forget things. (Without wishing to offend any prohibition advocate, I have to report that knocking around the world a man cannot help noticing that men who face peril regularly do sometimes take a drink to ease off things.)

A barmaid, answering to the name of Phyllis, presided over this pub, a blond, square-built, capable person, who had always about three or four of these captains standing on their heads. She was not without sentiment, but never letting sentiment interfere with business.

"Phyllis, my dear," a skipper would begin, and get about that far when she—her right hand reaching for the bottle of Scotch and her left for the soda—would be saying: "The same, captain?"—thereby choking off a great rush of words, and forwarding the business for which she drew one pound ten a week.

Before a creature of that kind these cargo captains were bound to preen themselves. They bought at frequent intervals, not at all like the ways of another group—not cargo captains—of whom one of our American warrant officers said: "You buy and buy and buy, and they drink and drink and drink. It comes time

for them to buy, and when it does they submerge, and don't come up for air."

These cargo skippers were always coming up for air. They would hunt a man three stories up in his room, wake him out of his sleep, and haul him down-stairs to have just one more. Between drinks, after they got to know a man pretty well, they would talk of their sea experiences; and, after the fashion of all true adventurers, their talk was almost always of the humorous side of things.

There was a skipper there one morning who bid all hands, especially Phyllis, good-by. He was off to Alexandria. He would not be back for three months—more likely five or six months. Phyllis pinned a flower in his coat and off he went. From the pub window they saw him board his ship, and an hour later saw her steam out of the harbor and to sea.

That was at ten in the morning. At five in the afternoon—the lights were just being turned on—those in the pub who happened to be looking out of the window thought they saw this captain's ghost coming up the waterside with his crew trailing behind him. The crew looked as if they had dressed in a hurry and were

scampering along to keep warm. But our skipper was wearing all he wore when he left the pub.

He drew nearer. It was no ghost. It was himself, even to the rose in his coat. He hailed Phyllis. She was talking to another skipper. The other skipper turned to see who was butting in, and seeing who it was, said: "To Egypt and back in seven hours—the quickest voyage ever I 'eard of!" Which comment so depressed the voyager that he refused to say anything about what had happened, except that five miles outside of the harbor he had been torpedoed, and they had to take to the boats in a hurry.

The foregoing is by way of introducing the captain who commented on the quick voyage. A few mornings later I was up at the Admiralty House when he came into the waiting-room, let himself carefully down into a mahogany chair, dropped his new soft gray hat into his lap, and looked around.

"A solemn place, ain't it? Would they 'ang a chap, d'y' think, if he was to 'ave a bit of a smoke for 'imself while waitin'?"

I said that I thought the fashion nowadays

was to take a man out and stand him up against the wall and shoot him.

He was tall, heavily built, fresh-colored, with a way of seeming to reflect deeply before he replied to anything. By and by he said: "Oh, aye!" and lit his cigarette, but had not taken the second puff when the doorkeeper's feet sounded outside, at which sound he pinched the cigarette hurriedly by the neck, and looked around for somewhere to dump it. There was no ash-tray, and the table being bare mahogany, the floor all polished wood, the fireplace with no fire in it, so brassy and shiny that to put anything there would be treason—he dropped the cigarette into his hat.

The doorkeeper smelled something, but he wasn't one who looked on lowly things when he walked, and so did not see the little spiral of smoke curling up from the hat.

My seafarer was in a great stew. To sit there and watch him was to warm up to him. There he was, a man who regularly faced death by more ways than one at sea, but now in deep fear that this shore-going flunky would catch him smoking a surreptitious cigarette. He stared determinedly at every place except

at his hat until the doorkeeper had passed on.

When he looked at his hat the cigarette had burned a hole in it. He viewed the hat sadly. "No gainsayin' it, war is 'ell, ain't it? I paid fourteen bob for that 'at three days back in Cardiff."

I went out to help him buy a new hat. Hat stores were scarce, but life does not end with hat stores; there were fleets of little places where a man could sit down and talk about more important things than hats.

In the hotel smoke-room after lunch there was no sugar for our coffee. His sea-training began to show at once. "The thing you 'ave to learn to do at sea is to go on your own. Nobody doing much for a chap that 'e don't do for hisself, is there?" From his coat pocket he drew an envelope which once held a letter from home—in place of the letter now was sugar. "Preparedness—'ere it is"—and sweetened our coffee from the envelope.

He spoke of his life at sea. "I can't say that I like it—I can't say I don't like it—but it was my life before the war and it 'as to be since. You've seen my ship, 'aven't you, lying to

moorings? Nothing great to look at, is she? but the managing director of our company—he has the 'andling of maybe a 'undred more like her—'Let 'em 'ave their grand passenger ships,' 'e says, 'but give me my cargo boats that pays for theirselves every two voyages.' The right idea 'e 'ad, I'll say for 'im. And for my part of it there is no everlastin' polishin' o' brahss and painting o' white work and no buying o' gold-laced uniforms at your own cost. And there's the bonus for me. Oh, aye! A bit of bonus ain't a bit of 'arm, you know, especially when you've a wife that's no eyesore to look at, and little kiddies growin' up.

"Torpedoed? Oh, aye. It's not to be expected of a man to escape that these days. My chum Bob, remember 'im—that was seven hours to Alexandria and back—with a rose in his coat? His fourth time torpedoed, that was. I've been blowed up only three times myself. Nothing much of anything special, the last time and the time before that—a matter of getting into boats and by and by being picked up—no more than that—no. But the first time—maybe it was a novelty-like then. 'Owever, I'd carried a load of coal to Naples and

getting twenty-two pounds a ton for coal that cost two pound ten in Cardiff maybe makes it a bit clearer what the managing director 'ad in mind when 'e said: 'let 'em have their grand passenger ships, but give me my little cargo boats.'

"From Naples I go on to Piræus in Greece, and we take a load on there—admiralty stuff, and not to be spoken of—and we put out for 'ome. She was a good old single-crew, this one o' mine. Twenty-five year old—not the worst, though I'd seen better. Well warmed up she could squeeze out eight knots, or maybe eight and a 'alf. I 'ung close to the land along that Greek shore, for if anything should 'appen ther's no sense 'aving too long a row to the beach in boats.

"Very good. We're rollin' along one morning when the radio man came in with a message which read: 'PUT INTO NEAREST PORT. U-BOATS.'

"And without ado we puts into a little place down at the 'eel of Italy, and that night I 'ad a 'ot barth an' a lovely long sleep in my brahss bed which the missus 'ad given me for Christmas the last time 'ome. And a great pleasure it was, I say.

"Next mornin' we put to sea again, and next day after comes another radio, and it says: 'PUT INTO NEAREST PORT. U-BOATS.' And we put into Malta, and that night again I 'ad another 'ot barth and a fine sleep in my brahss bed.

"We resume our voyage from Malta, and a two days later I gets another radio—more U-boats—and I puts into Algiers. Three times in one week that made with me 'aving me 'ot barth and a fine sleep in me brahss bed—grand good luck, I say now, and said it then to the mate, adding to it: 'There's a signal station west of Gibraltar—wouldn't it be delightful passing that signal station to get the word to put back to Gib and stop there for another night and I 'ave another 'ot barth and a lovely sleep in my four-poster bed.' But the mate 'e only says 'e didn't have no brahss bed aboard ship to sleep in, and he saved his 'ot barths, he did, 'til he got 'ome to enjoy 'em proper.

"Summer-time it was, and I likes to take my little siesta after lunch—just like the Dons theirselves, y' know—and I'm 'aving me siesta next day after lunch when something woke me up. There's a shelf of books on the wall o'

my room—chart-books and the like—and when all at once I see them pilin' down on top of me I say to myself: 'Somethin's 'appened.' And so it 'ad. The mate 'e sticks 'is 'ead in the door and says: 'We're torpedoed, sir.'

"'There goes my bonus,' I says, and goes on deck.

"We carried a 3-inch gun in a little 'ouse aft, and there was the mate firing at the U-boat, which was out of water and maybe two miles away. It was one of those out-of-date guns the navy would have no more to do with, and so they passes it on to us. New good guns would probably be wasted on us, and maybe that's true. None of us aboard ever fired a shot from the gory weapon till this day. The mate fired two shots at the U-boat, but 'e don't 'it anything. The U-boat fires two shots at us and she 'its something. One of 'em pahsses through the chart house, and the other tears a nice little 'ole in 'er for'ard.

"That'll do for that gun practice,' I says.

"'Aren't you goin' to 'ave a go at 'em?' says the mate.

"'You can 'ave all the go at 'em you please,' I says, 'after we leave the ship. Besides you

there's 19 men and 4 Eurasians in this crew, and some of 'em will maybe like to see 'ome again—I know I do!'

"We get into the boats, myself takin' along what was left of a second case of Scotch, and good old pre-war Scotch it was, not the gory infant's food they serve these days that a man 'as to take a tumblerful of to know 'e's 'aving a drink at all. I also took along three sofy cushions, hand-worked by the missus, with pink doves and cupids and the like—rare lookin' they was. 'A man might's well be comfortable,' I says.

"I 'ad a cook. 'If comfort's the word,' says the cook, 'I might's well take along the wife's canary,' and 'e takes it along in a cage in one 'and, and a bag of clothes in the other. 'E's in the boat when 'e thinks to go back for a package of seed 'e'd left for the canary on the shelf in the galley. 'Hurry up with your bird-seed,' I says, and as I do a shell comes along and explodes inside of 'er old frame somewheres, and the cook says maybe 'e'll be gettin' along without the seed—the canary not being what you'd call a 'eavy eater, anyway.

"The mate 'ad a cameraw, and when we're

clear of the ship he would stand up and set the cameraw on the shoulders of a Eurasian fireman, and take shots of the ship between shells.

"In good time one last shell 'its 'er, and down she goes. The U-boat moves off, and we see no more of 'er.

"It's a fine day and a lovely pink sunset, and there's a beautiful mild sirocco blowing off the African shore to make the 'ot night pleasant as we approach it in the boats. A man could 'ardly arsk to be torpedoed under more pleasant conditions, I say, and we continue to row toward the shore in 'igh 'opes. It's maybe two in the mornin' when we see the side-lights of a ship. She's bound east—a steamer—and we know she's a Britisher, because we're the only chaps carried lights in war zones at that time. Carryin' lights at night o' course made us grand marks for the U-boats, but there was no 'elp for it. A board o' trade regulation, that was, and no gettin' away from what the board o' trade says. We had our choice of carryin' lights and losin' our ships, or not carryin' lights and losin' our jobs. So we lost our ships. After a year and a 'alf of war some bright chap in the board said that maybe it would be a good

idea to change the regulation about carrying lights, and they did. And about time, we said.

"Some of the crew were for 'ailing the ship in the night. ''Ail 'ell!' I says. 'D'y' think I want to be took into that rotten 'ole of a Port Said, or maybe Alexandria, and that end of the Mediterranean fair lousy with U-boats. Besides, we'll get 'ome quicker this way,' I says, and allows her to pass on. In the mornin' we run onto the beach, and 'ardly there when a crowd of Ayrabs come gallopin' down on 'orseback to us. 'We'll be killed now,' says the mate, and talks under his breath of stubborn captains, who wouldn't 'ail a friendly ship's light in the dark, but the only killing the Ayrabs do is two young goats for breakfast. And they make coffee that was coffee, and we had a lovely meal on the sand. And by and by they steered us along the shore to where was a French destroyer, which takes us over to Gibraltar, and from Gib we passed on through Spain and France to Havre. Three weeks that took, and I never 'ad such a three weeks in all my life. 'Eroes, ragin' 'eroes—that's wot we were!

"At Havre the French authorities took the

mate's pictures out of the cameraw, and they never did give 'em back. Except for that, it was a fine pleasure, that land cruise 'ome.

"Lucky? Oh, aye, you may well say it. Three times in one week I 'ad me 'ot barth and my lovely sleep in me brahss bed—it's not to be looked for with ordinary luck, you know."

One day the destroyer to which I was assigned put to sea. There were other destroyers, and we were to take a fleet of merchantmen from the naval base to such and such a latitude and longitude, and there turn them loose. My friend's ship was of the convoy.

We made such and such a latitude and longitude, and there we turned them loose, signalling the position to them and waiting for acknowledgment. They acknowledged the signal. We then hoisted the three pennants which everywhere at sea means: Pleasant voyage! They answered with the three pennants which everywhere spells: Thank you. And no sooner done than away they belted, each for himself, and let the U-boats get the hindmost.

The hindmost here was the rusty old cargo boat of my friend. I could see her for miles

after the others were hull down; and long after I could see her I could picture him—walking his lonely bridge and his ship plugging away at her 7 or maybe 7½ knots across the lonely ocean.

Three times torpedoed and taking it all as part of his work! Some day they may get him and he not come back; and when they do the world will hear little about him. Hero? He a hero? Why a shore-going flunky had him bluffed for smoking a surreptitious cigarette in high quarters! 'Ero? Not 'im. Why 'e don't even wear a uniform.

So there they are, the wheezing old cargo boats and their officers and crew. British, French, Italian, American, but mostly British.

No heroes, but the Lord help their people if they hadn't stayed on the job.

FLOTILLA HUMOR—AT SEA

WE were a group of American destroyers convoying twenty homebound British steamers. There was one ship, a *P. & O.* liner, a great specimen of camouflaging.

She was the only ship in the convoy that was camouflaged, and she rode in stately style two lengths out in front of the others. All of which made her a prominent object. Our officers felt like telling her to dress back; but she had a British commodore aboard, and for an American two or three striper to try to advise a British commodore—well, it isn't done.

All day long she rode out in front of the column, and all day long our fellows kept saying things about her.

"Isn't she the chesty one!"

"Look at the big squab with all that warpaint on—how does she expect any U-boat to overlook her?"

"That big loafer, she'd better watch out or she'll be getting hers before the day's gone!"

U-boats were thick around there. One of

them must have come up, looked the convoy over, and said, "Well, there's nothing to this but the big one!" and, Bing! let her have it, for it was not yet quite dark when those who were looking at her saw a column like steam go into the air, a black column like coal follow it, and after that a column of water boiling white.

One of our destroyers hopped to twenty-five knots, dumped over a 300-pound "ash-can," and got Mister U-boat. At least, the British admiralty later gave her 100 per cent on the circumstantial evidence. Two other destroyers—the 396 and the 384, we will call them—went at once to the job of taking off passengers from the sinking ship.

That was at five minutes to six, just before dark. It had interrupted dinner on our ship; but by and by we went back to the ward-room to finish eating. It is always good business to eat—no knowing when a man will be needing a good meal to be standing by him inside. And we were still eating when the messenger came in with a radio. He passed it to the skipper, who read it to himself, whistled, and then read aloud: TORPEDOED—CLAN LINDSAY.

The *Clan Lindsay* was another of our con-

voy, and she had been within 1,000 yards of our ship when we last came about to zigzag back across the front of our column.

We looked at one another, and one said: "Well, you got to hand it to Fritz for being on the job every minute."

And another: "Yes, but it looks like a big night to-night. Two in an hour! And eighteen more ships and eight destroyers to pick from yet! If he starts off like that, what d'y' s'pose he'll be batting by morning?"

The ward-room on our ship opens onto the ship's galley; and from the ship's galley another door opens onto the deck. Through the open galley-door just then came a muffled explosion—a great Woof!

We all thought just one thing—they've got us too!—and we all sort of half curled up, and would not have been a bit surprised if the next instant we found ourselves sailing through the deck overhead. The feeling lasted for perhaps three seconds, and then our skipper, happening to look up, saw that the colored mess-boy George was grinning widely.

"What the devil you laughing at?" barked out our skipper.

George took his eyes off the galley-door, but

his grin remained. Said George: "Cap'n, I see de flame. The galley stove just done bust!"

The galley stove on our ship was an oil-burner. It had back-fired, and so the loud Woof!

Later it came out that the *Clan Lindsay* wasn't torpedoed at all; but one of our destroyers dropped a depth charge so close to her to get a U-boat that she thought she was.

The camouflaged big liner sank, but not until the two of our destroyers standing by had taken off every one of the 503 passengers, one taking the people off the deck, the other picking up those in the small boats. One destroyer—the 396, say—took off 307 of these passengers. Her skipper passed the word by radio to the 384, which had gathered in 196 passengers, including the commodore. The 384 got the message, only she got it 7 instead of 307 people rescued.

"Seven survivors!" said the 384's skipper. "I wonder why she radioed that?" He meditated over the puzzle and by and by solved it to his satisfaction.

"Of course, what she wants is for us to take off the seven and add 'em to our own." He took measures to meet the emergency, and then followed this little incident:

Aboard the 396 they were busy trying to find space for their 307 passengers when a lookout heard a Putt! putt! putt! coming over the water. The officer of the deck listened. Everybody on the bridge listened. Putt! putt! putt! it came. The officer of the deck reported to the skipper. The skipper wondered who it could be, when just then a radio message arrived: "Am sending a boat—384."

"Sending a boat? What for?" He meditated over that puzzle and then he solved it —as he thought. "Sure. That British commodore she picked up is coming to see how the survivors aboard here are getting on. That's it"—he turned to the watch-officer— "you know how these Britishers are for regulations. Even in the midst of a mess like this we'll have to kotow to his rank or he'll probably be reporting us. So rouse out six sideboys, line 'em up, rig up the port ladder, have the bugler stand by for ta-ra-rums and all that stuff."

They did that, shoving their crowded survivors out of the way to make room for the ceremony.

The Putt! putt! putt! comes nearer and nearer. Next, from out of the blackness of the ocean they make out a little motor-dory. Balanced out on the gunwale of the little dory, when it comes nearer, they see an American bluejacket smoking a cigarette. No one else was in the dory.

The dory ran alongside. It was about a 14-foot dory—no smaller one in the flotilla. The skipper of the 396 looked down at him. "What you want?"

The bluejacket removed the cigarette from his lips. "I'm from the 384, sir."

"Yes, yes, but what do you want?"

"I've come, sir"—he waved his cigarette-stub airily—"to take off the survivors. The captain thought I might be able to make one load of 'em."

When the big *P. & O.* liner reported herself torpedoed that evening, a destroyer—not one of ours—picked up the message 100 miles or so away; and at once radioed: COMING TO YOUR

ASSISTANCE—GIVE POSITION, COURSE, AND SPEED.

That was proper and well-intentioned, but as the 384 and the 396 were already standing by, a radio was sent back: EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT—NO HELP NEEDED—THANK YOU.

That did not seem to satisfy the inquirer. WOULD LIKE TO HELP—GIVE POSITION, SPEED, AND COURSE.

Everybody being busy, nobody bothered to answer that. By and by came another radio: THIS IS THE DESTROYER BLANK—GIVE POSITION, SPEED, AND COURSE.

He was so evidently one of those Johnnies who are always volunteering to do things not needful to be done that nobody paid any further attention to him. But he kept right on sending radios. By and by, for perhaps the seventh time, came: THIS IS THE DESTROYER BLANK—PLEASE GIVE POSITION, SPEED, AND COURSE OF TORPEDOED SHIP.

At which some one—nobody seemed to know who, but possibly some undistinguished enlisted radio man whose ears were becoming wearied—sparked out into the night: POSITION OF TORPEDOED SHIP? BETWEEN TWO DE-

STROYERS. HER SPEED? ABOUT FOUR FEET AN HOUR. HER COURSE? TOWARD THE BOTTOM OF THE ATLANTIC.

Nobody ever found who sent that message; nobody inquired too closely; but all hands thanked him. The flotilla heard no more from the bothersome destroyer.

The business of hunting U-boats is a grim one. The officers and men engaged in it do not like to dwell on the hard side of it. They do like to repeat stories of the humorous side of it.

One of our destroyer commanders over there has a personality that the others like to hang stories onto. He is a quick-thinking, quick-acting man named—well, say Lanahan. He was one day on the bridge of his ship when the lookout shouted: "Periscope!"

"Charge her!" yelled out Lanahan.

Away they went hooked-up for the periscope, which everybody could now see—about 200 yards ahead.

"He's a nervy one—see her stay up!" said the officer of the deck, who was standing beside the wheel, and had glasses on the periscope.

And then, hurriedly: "I don't like the looks of her, captain—it looks like a phony periscope to me—as if there was a mine under it!"

"To hell with her—ram her anyway!" snapped Lanahan.

The deck officer had not once taken the glasses off the periscope. Suddenly he let drop his glasses, grabbed the wheel and pulled it hard toward him.

Lanahan had stepped to the wing of the bridge and was leaning far out to get a glimpse of the U-boat. What he saw beneath him as his ship scraped by was not a U-boat, but a great white mine. He watched it slide safely past the bridge, past his quarter, past his stern. Then, turning around, he said gravely to his deck officer:

"You're right—it *was* a mine."

There was another young officer—Chisholm call him—who played poker occasionally. He commanded a *flivver*, which is the service name for the smaller class of destroyers, the 750-ton ones.

In our navy there are plenty of young officers who will tell you that they never built

destroyers which keep the sea better than that same little flivver class. Young Captain Chisholm of the 323 was one.

One morning, having convoyed a fleet of merchant ships safely up the channel, the 323 was one of a group of destroyers making the best of their way to their base port. Officers and men who have been hunting U-boats for a week or so do not like to linger along the road home; so it was every young captain giving his ship all the steam she could stand and let her belt.

It was breaking white water all around when they started. It grew rougher. Chisholm in the 323 was going along at twenty knots when a poker-playing chum came along in his big 1,000-ton destroyer. Her nose hauled up on the quarter of the 323; up to her beam; up to her bridge. As he passed the 323—and he passed quite close to let all hands view the passing—the poker-playing friend leaned out and megaphoned across:

"What you making, Chiz?"

"Twenty knots!" hailed back Chisholm.

"I am seeing your twenty knots and raising you five!" returned the other, and passed on.

"The boiler-riveted nerve of him!" gasped Chiz. "But let him wait!"

The sea grew yet rougher. The 323 was bouncing pretty lively, but hanging onto her twenty knots. "And at twenty you let her hang if she rolls her crow's nest under!" said Chisholm to his watch-officer, "and I'll betcher we won't be acting rudder to this bunch going into port!"

It was at ten in the morning that the big one had passed them. It was four in the afternoon, and the 323 was still going along at twenty knots when from out of the drizzle ahead her bridge made out the stern and funnels of a destroyer. It was Chiz's poker-playing chum, and his ship was making heavy weather of it. The able little 323 came up to her stern; breasted her waist, her bridge, and as he passed her (and he came quite close to let all hands view the passing), young Captain Chisholm leaned out from his bridge and roared through a long megaphone: "I *call* yuh!"

He beat the big one fifty minutes into the naval base.

There are two channels leading into the naval base port—call them West and East.

This same Chisholm was one day headed for port in the usual hurry and was already well into the west channel when a signal was whipped out from the signal hill. It was for his ship and it read: "West Channel mined last night by U-boats. Proceed to sea and come in by East Channel."

Chiz did not proceed to sea. All the harbor men who were watching saw him come straight on through the gap in the barrage, and safely on to his mooring. Also all the harbor knew that next morning he had to report to the admiralty and explain.

The story of his explanation was not told by himself. But an officer friend, a great admirer—call him Mac—had gone with him to the admiralty. Here the next day Mac told the story in the smoke-room of the King's Hotel:

"Well, Chiz went and—you know his courtly style—he has his cape over his shoulders—and he salaams and says, 'Good morning, sir.'

"The old man looks up and says like ice: 'You got my signal yesterday afternoon?'

"'I did, sir.'

"'Then why did you not turn back and come in by the other channel?'

"'Sir,' says Chiz, 'may I be allowed a few words?'

"'Very few. What have you to say?'

"'Sir,' says Chiz, 'I have been trained to believe that the one word a naval officer should not know is fear. In our navy, sir, we reverence the tradition of your own Admiral Nelson, who at the siege of Copenhagen put his glass to his blind eye and said: "I see no signal to withdraw!" and continued the fighting to a victory.'

"'Have you a blind eye, too?'

"'My sight is good, thanking you, sir, for inquiring, but in my own navy we also have the tradition of Admiral Farragut, who at Mobile Bay said: "Damn the torpedoes—go on!" and his fleet went on to victory. And there was Admiral Dewey, who said: "Damn the mines!" at Manilla, and went on to victory.

"'What are you coming at?' roars the old man. 'Did you get my signal?'

"'I did, sir. And my first instinct—the instinct of all our naval officers—is to obey all orders of our superiors, sir. But I was well

into that channel when I got the signal, sir. And as I have said, sir, my first instinct was to obey orders. But also I stop and reflect, for I have also been trained to believe that hasty judgments work many evils, sir, and I consider and find myself saying to my deck officer: "This ship, Mac, is 300 feet long, and under her stern there are two big propellers. If ever we turn this 300-foot ship in this channel with those two propellers churning and there's any loose German mines around, there won't be a blamed one of 'em she'll miss. But if I keep her straight on, there's a chance. So hell's afire!" I says to Mac—"there's only one thing for us to do now and that is to keep straight on!" And I kept straight on, sir—and, I beg leave to report it now, sir—we made our mooring safely.

"And that's all there was to that," concluded Mac.

There was a long silence in the smoke-room when Mac had done, and then a voice asked: "If Chiz had gone to sea and come in by the other channel—it was almost dark at the time—he would have been too late to make the barrage, wouldn't he?"

"He sure would," said Mac.

"Which would mean that he would be kept turning his wheels over outside the net all night?"

"He sure would."

"As it was, he got in in plenty of time for that little game up-stairs last night?"

"He was in a little game," admitted Mac.

Another silence, and then another voice: "Well, poker or no poker, Chiz's dope on that damn-the-torpedo stuff isn't the worst in the world!"

FLOTILLA HUMOR—ASHORE

THE incident reported in the previous chapter was not young Chisholm's first interview with the British admiral.

Mac went on to tell how when, after his first cruise, Chiz came to the naval base to report. He had heard that the old fellow in charge believed that the Lord made the earth for admirals, especially British admirals, but beyond that he knew nothing of his peculiarities.

However, after his cruise, Chiz went whistling up the hill to report. By and by he was admitted to the presence of the admiral, who was seated at a flat desk in the middle of the room, gazing straight ahead.

The old chap looked pretty frosty. Chiz waited a moment, then ventured a cheery "Good morning, sir."

The face at the desk did not even turn to look at him, but the thin lips almost opened and a rasping voice said: "Got anything to say to me?"

Chiz was one of the sociable souls, and he

would have liked to sit down and talk in an informal way of several little sea things that he thought were fairly interesting. But he had not been asked even to sit down, and the voice froze him. So, "Why, no sir, nothing special to report," was all he could find to say.

"H-m. Nothing to say? Then why waste my time or your own? Might as well get out, hadn't you?"

Chiz got out.

"An American lieutenant-commander in this place must rate about seven numbers below a yellow dog," said Chiz to Mac when he came out.

Chiz had four days in port (Mac is still telling the story) after that cruise, and two days after his visit to the hill there was a cricket-match between a team from our flotilla and a team from theirs. The idea was for all hands to forget rank for a while, get into the game, and so cement the entente between the two nations.

Chiz was picked for one of our team, and you all know what a husky he is, and what he used to do with a baseball-bat. There aren't many who ever hit 'em any further or oftener than Chiz on the old Annapolis ball-field. He

was one of the first of our fellows to go to bat. He's standing there—in the box, or whatever they call it, waiting for one to his liking; and looking around the field wondering where he will place it when he gets one to his liking. And as he looks he spies his friend the admiral, playing what we'd call left field. And just beyond the admiral the ground sloped away for a hundred yards or so.

Chiz hefts his bat—and you know those cricket-bats, what they look like and how they feel after you've been used to meeting fast ones with a narrow baseball-bat. They are wide and heavy and springy. Chiz doesn't pay any attention to three or four balls that come along, except to fend them away from the wicket with his wide cricket-bat. He knew what he wanted, and by and by he got one—one about knee-high with a little incurve to it. Chiz sets himself and swings and whale-O it goes, over the old admiral's head and down the slope beyond.

Chiz makes all the runs the law allows—six, I think it is—and he's sitting resting on the wide part of his cricket-bat before the admiral even shows the top of his head over the

hill with the ball. When he does and heaves it about half-way to the pitcher, or bowler, or whatever they call him, he's out of breath.

Chiz sets himself for another one knee-high with an inshoot, and when he gets one he whales it again, and away trots the admiral on another hunt down the hill. And Chiz makes six more runs before they even see the top of the admiral's head over the brow of the hill.

The third time, and the fourth time, Chiz sets for a knee-high one with an inshoot to it, and the third time and the fourth time he belts it over the old fellow's head and down the long slope. But on the fourth time the old fellow doesn't throw the ball in. He walks in with it and he calls in the high official umpires, or whoever they are in charge, and they have a conference, and the next thing they call the game off. By this time, doubtless (so the word was passed), the American officers have caught the idea of the game, and next time there would be a real game and so on.

But there was no next game. However, next day Chiz puts out to sea, and when he's into port again he calls up on the hill as per instructions. And by and by he is passed again

into the presence, who is sitting just as before at the flat desk in the middle of the room, and gazing straight before him.

This time Chiz doesn't speak, not even to say: "Good morning, sir." And the graven image at the desk doesn't speak either, and there's a silence for maybe a minute, and then the old fellow barks out: "What are you standing there for? You wish to see me?" And Chiz barks out in his turn: "No, sir, I don't wish to see you."

"You do not wish to see me? Then what are you doing here?"

And Chiz cracks out: "I'm here because your orders compel me to be here, sir."

Zowie!—that straightened the old boy up. He took a look at Chiz, and he says, after a while and almost pleasantly: "Have a chair."

And Chiz has a chair, and they have a talk, and after that Chiz finds him a lot easier to get along with. Chiz says now that the old fellow isn't such a terrible chap—not after you get onto his curves.

When we first came over (Mac is still speaking), most of the topsiders over here were strong

for the entente stuff, and a good thing, too—why not?

Our fellows were mostly strong for it, too—two or three so strong that it was hard to tell whether they were Americans or something else—even their accents.

And, as I say, most of the officers of our own over here were for it—most of them. But you can't rid everybody overnight of long-inherited notions. There was one chap we used to meet, and he sure was the most patronizing thing!

Now, we know we haven't the biggest navy in the world, but as far as it goes we think it is pretty good. As good as anybody's, man for man, and ship for ship—but let that pass.

This chap, who never could see anything in our navy, came in here one day. He wasn't bad. He was just one of those naturally foolish ones who thought he was a little brighter than his company. The topsiders would be working night and day to create good feeling, and he was the kind would come along and break up the show—not exactly meaning to.

This was in the hotel bar here, where a bunch of us were easing off after a hard cruise,

when he comes along. He doesn't like the names of our destroyers. In his navy there was significance in the names they gave to a class of ships.

"Take *Viper*, *Adder*, *Moccasin*, and so on—they suggest things y' know. Dangerous to meddle with and all that sort of thing, y' know. But your people name your ships after men evidently—*David Jones*, *Conyngham*, *McDonough*. I say, who are they—Presidents or senators or that sort, or what?"

Lanahan was there—the hell-with-her-ram-her-anyway Lanahan—and we all just naturally turned him over to Lanahan, who had west-of-Ireland forebears, and never did believe in letting any Englishman put anything across—nothing like that anyway.

"You never read much, I take it, of our history?" says Lanahan.

"Your history? My dear chap, I had hard work keeping up with my own."

"No doubt. But you've heard of the American Revolution?"

"I dessay I have— Oh, yes, I have!"

"Well, you spoke of Jones. If you mean John Paul, then there was a naval fight one

time in the North Sea—the *Serapis* and the *Bonhomme Richard.*"

"I say, old chap, I didn't mention John Paul Jones. *David Jones* is the name of your destroyer out in the harbor now."

"David Jones? Let me see. Why, sure, David Jones was a New England parson who boarded around among the God-fearing neighbors for his keep on week-days and preached the wrath of God and hell-fire for his cash wage —five pound a year—on Sundays. He was a devout man. If thy finger offend thee, cut it off. But a sort of muscular Christian, too. If thy enemy cross thee, go out and whale the livers and lights out of him—same as we're trying to do to the U-boats now.

"Well, David lived in the shadow of the church till he was thirty-seven years of age. Then the Revolution broke, and David, in whose veins flowed the blood of old Covenanters, took a running long jump into it. He started in as deck-hand or, perhaps, it was cook's helper, but there was salt in his veins too, and rapidly he learned his trade. And soon rose in his new profession until he was master of his own ship, and, as master, raising

the devil among the coasters which used to cruise out of Maritime Province ports in those days. The captures he made of vessels loaded with hay and potatoes, and so on, materially reduced the high cost of living for New England folks in those days.

"Conyngham? He was a young American lad who did not come of any particularly good old stock, meaning that he did not come from Massachusetts or Virginia probably. He went to sea as a midshipman on an American sloop-of-war. And he turned out to be some little middy. Ensign, lieutenant, commander—man, he just ran up the ladder of naval rank. And got a ship of his own—a fine, young, able sloop-of-war, and with this sloop-of-war he would run out from the French channel ports and harry the English coast and English shipping. Never heard of him? No? Well, well!—and he so famous in his day that King George put up a reward of 1,000 pounds for his capture dead or alive. But they never captured him.

"And Barry? He was the Wexford boy who captured 200 English prizes more or less in the West Indies. Paul Jones trained under Barry before he had a ship of his own.

And McDonough? He—but am I boring you?"

"No, no—it is very interesting."

"I am glad. Well, McDonough was the commodore who fought the battle of Lake Champlain against your people. He opened that battle with prayers for the living and closed it with prayers for the dead. You want to watch out for those fellows who pray when they go to war. Their technic is sometimes pretty good. Their spirit is always good. While Mac was looking over the booty after that fight, a funny thing happened. He——"

"I say, old chap, it's all very interesting, exceedingly interesting, but what d'y' say to another little nip before I go? I've got to run along to see the chief now. What will you have to drink?"

"Sure. A nip of Irish, if you please. And here"—Lanahan held up his glass—"here's to the memory of dead heroes—may they always be preferred to crawling reptiles when it comes to naming our fighting ships!"

After the other fellow had gone Lanahan turned to us. "Say, fellows, I know I got Paul Jones and Barry and McDonough right,

but how near was I on Davey Jones and Conyngham? Something tells me I got their histories mixed."

This admiral, of whom our fellows used to spin the yarns, was a unique character. He lacked imagination, and he had the manner of a rat-terrier toward people not of his own kind; but he was one good executive.

Devotion to duty—conscience—those were his beacon lights. He had been known, when the minister of the local church wasn't up to standard, to walk into the pulpit, and deliver the sermon himself. Before he came to take command of this coast district the U-boats had been raising Cain there. There was a fleet of steam-trawlers handled by their old fishing captains and crews, whose special duty it was to sweep up the waters just outside the harbor for mines. It was at that time a dangerous business, but it was also monotonous. It was a duty most easy to evade.

Who was to say they had not swept up? No cove at a naval base five hundred miles away, that was sure! Even if mines were found there after they reported it swept clear, what would that prove? The Huns were lay-

ing mines all the time, weren't they? So—war days are hard enough anyway—why not ease up now and again?

They eased up. Many a snug little place there was along the coast where a crew could go ashore and have a pleasant time for a day or two. There were reports to fill out, but what were reports? Ship a clerk in the crew and who would know? Surely not some aide at the naval base who spent his busiest hours taking the admiral's niece to tea fights!

The British public will probably stand more from their lawfully ordained rulers than any other public on earth. They stood for a good many ships being mined on that coast before they began to ask the why of it.

The powers returned with facts and figures, percentage tables, and so on, of ships departing and ships arriving; proving clearly that the number of ships lost was no more than was to be expected. Whereupon the British public took to writing letters to the press. British politicians take letters to the press seriously; a new man, the admiral we have been talking of, was sent to take charge of the district.

He got down to business. He fitted out a

30-knot despatch-boat and away he went! All along that coast he pounced in on little harbors where mine-sweepers should be found working outside, but where he found them working mostly inside at little sociable gatherings where was a dance or the like going on in front and a little something nourishing to drink in back. Our stern and efficient admiral lit into them like a gull into a school of herring. Out by their gills he hauled them, and pretty soon the B. P. began to read less of percentages and more of results.

One of the first results was that some trawler skippers lost their jobs, and new skippers took their places. This was at the time that rewards of five pounds or so were offered the skippers bringing a mine into port.

That five pounds looked pretty good to one of the new skippers; and when one night at a pub a discharged skipper confided to him where there was a nest of German mines, out he goes into the gray dawn to be there first. He's there first, and sure enough it's a grand little spot for mines. He hooks into one, lashes it under his quarter and goes scooting back to harbor, which happens to be the naval base.

Proudly and noisily he steamed along, shouting to everybody he met of his good luck, and asking the course to the admiral's ship. Everybody he met gave him the course and also the full width of the channel as he passed. He ran alongside the flag-ship, hailing loudly for the admiral as he steamed up.

The admiral was not on board, but his aide was, and the aide came on to have a look over the side. He saw the mine bouncing up and down between the mine-sweeper's quarter and his own ship's side. Shove off—"get away from us!" yelled the aide. "Suppose you press one of those little feelers and blow us all to pieces—get away, I tell you!"

The mine-sweeper skipper looked up—"Feelers, sir?"—and then looked down at the mine. "Feelers, sir? Oh-h, you mean them little 'orns stickin' out on 'er? Bly-mee, sir, I thought I'd knocked 'em all hoff afore I lashed her alongside. But 'ave no fear, sir, there's only two of 'em left, and I'll bloomin' well soon"—he reaches for an oar and went bouncing aft—"bloomin' well soon knock them hoff, too, sir!"

THE UNQUENCHABLE DESTROYER BOYS

ONE day last summer a group of our destroyers were sent across the Atlantic. It was a night-and-day strain for all hands—watching out for raiders, watching out for U-boats, watching out for everything, and grabbing snatches of sleep when they could.

Arriving at their naval base, every skipper of the little fleet felt pretty well used up. But every worth-while skipper thinks first of his men. One we have in mind passed the word to his crew that whoever cared to take a run ashore to stretch his legs and forget sea things for a while, why—to go to it. And stay till morning quarters if they wished.

As fast as they could clean up and shift into shore clothes they were going over the side. Our young captain felt then that perhaps there was a little something coming to himself; so he turned in, and he was logging great things in the sleeping line when the anchor watch, who

was also a signal quartermaster, woke him up with:

"Signal from the admiralty, sir."

"Read it."

The S. Q. M. read it—an order to proceed at once to an oil dock and take oil.

It was nine o'clock at night when our skipper had come to moorings. It was now one in the morning, and he knew he could have slept for another week; however, orders were to oil up.

He turned out and mustered what remained aboard of his crew. There were about a dozen. He sent three to the fire-room, three to the engine-room, one here, another there, himself took the wheel, and with his signal quartermaster acting as a sort of officer of the deck, set out to find the oil dock.

He had never seen that harbor before that night, but he sheered close in to every ship's anchor light he saw and hailed for the course to the oil dock. Most of them did not know, but one now and then passed him a word or two, and so he bumped along and by and by made the oil dock.

Officers who have business with it will tell you that the naval organization of the British

is pretty complete. Our young skipper found everything ready for him now. Men ashore made fast his lines, connected up his pipes, filled his tanks—all in good order. Sister destroyers were oiling up with him, and with tanks filled they all bumped their way back to moorings, again without sinking anything along the way.

It was then daylight, and right after breakfast they all had to report to the admiralty, so no use trying to sleep any more. Arrived at the admiralty, the officer in command complimented them on their safe run across, and then went on to say that of course they had had a trying passage, and naturally their ships, especially engines and boilers, would have to be overhauled—all very natural and proper—and of course the needful time for overhauling, and for officers and crew—two, three, four days, whatever it was—would be granted; but (they knew the need) the question was: How long before they would be ready to go to sea?

The young destroyer commanders had discussed that and other possibilities in the reception-room outside, so when the senior of the group looked from one to the other of his col-

leagues they had only to nod, for him to turn to the admiral and say:

"We are ready now, sir."

Which remark should become one of the historic remarks of this war.

At this time—at the gates to the North Sea, the English Channel, the Irish coast—the U-boats were collecting frightful toll. In the Mediterranean they were running wild. Five ships from one convoy in one day—three of them big P. & O. liners—was one of their records in the Eastern Mediterranean.

To the natural question, Why haven't you checked them? almost any young British naval officer felt like saying: "Check 'em? Try it yourself and check 'em! You go out there and keep your ship zigzagging full speed night and day for three years and see how you like it! Go out there in rough weather and fog with not a minute's let-up, and see if you get to where the fall of a bucket of a dark night will make you jump three feet in the air or not! Our ships were not built, and our chaps were not trained, to beat their rotten game."

So things were when our fellows took hold, and hearing no word from them for a long time

and then but a meagre one, it may be that many a citizen on this side was saying to himself:

"Well, they're gone, that little flotilla, swallowed up in the mists of the Atlantic, and that is all we know about them. And now I wonder what they're doing over there? Are they doing great work or are they tied up to a dock at the naval base, and their officers and crews roistering ashore?"

I can say from several weeks' observation later that they were not doing too much roistering ashore. Before leaving this side I found no evidence that anybody in Washington wished to suppress the record of what that little fleet was doing. Secretary Daniels and Chairman Creel of the Committee on Public Information believed with me that our little fellows over there were doing things worth recording. This fact is set down here because many people last summer believed there was too much suppression of the news of our fighting forces; and suspicion of suppression breeds distrust. Our fellows perhaps were not doing well. If they were doing well, wouldn't we be told more?

But they have ideas of their own on these matters over on the other side, and it is the other side which has most to say of what shall or shall not be given out for publication. In a previous chapter I have reported the answer of the British admiral in charge to my request to be allowed to cruise on an American destroyer. The reply was a flat and immediate: "No. They did not allow British writers on British ships; why should they allow an American writer on an American ship?"

It had to be explained that despite what they allowed or did not allow, English papers did publish praiseful items about the deeds of the British navy; and even if they did not publish such items, conditions governing publicity in the United States and the British Isles were not equal. The British navy was a tremendous one and it was operating just off their own shores; officers and men were regularly going ashore by the thousands and to their friends and families, if to nobody else, they talked of what was going on; and it does not take long for thousands of bluejackets to spread the gossip in a country where no spot in it is more than forty miles from tide-water, whereas

our nearest Atlantic ports were three thousand miles from our base of operations in Europe, and it was another three thousand miles to our west coast.

It also had to be pumped into the admiralty over there that possibly the American and British publics did not hold to quite the same ideas about their respective navies. It was possible that the 110,000,000 people of the United States looked on our navy as not altogether the property of the officers and men in it; possibly our 110,000,000 people over here looked on the navy as their navy, that they had a right to know something of what it was doing; and so (this item had to be pointed out to one of our own topside officers, too) as that same public were paying the bills of the navy, no harm perhaps to let them in on a few things or, this being the twentieth century, they might take it into their heads some day to have no navy at all.

It took the foregoing talk and something more before I could get the permission of the British Admiralty to cruise on one of our own destroyers over there. This isn't so much a criticism of the British Admiralty as to show

that their point of view differs from ours; and to show that it was not Washington which was holding up news of our navy over there.

As to what they have been doing! They have been doing great work. I cruised over there on one of our destroyers. She was five years old, yet one day during an 85-mile run to answer an S O S call she exceeded her builder's trial by half a knot. Incidentally, she saved a merchantman which had been shelled for four hours by a U-boat and her $3,000,000 cargo; also she ran the U-boat under—one of the new big U-boats with two 5.9 deck guns. On the same day two other destroyers of our group took from a sinking liner 503 passengers without the loss of a life. One of these destroyers lashed herself to the sinking ship the more quickly to get them off; and as the liner went down our little ship had to use her emergency steam to get away in time. A fourth destroyer of ours got the U-boat which sank the liner. That was the record of one little group of destroyers in one day; and it is detailed here because the writer happened to be present when these things happened.

When our fellows first went over they had to

learn a few things from the British. We had first to get rid of some childish ideas about depth charges. We brought over a toy size of 50 to 60 pounds. They showed us a man's size one—300 pounds of T N T, a contraption looking so much like a galvanized iron ash-barrel with flattened sides that they call them "ash-cans."

These ash-cans do not have actually to hit the U-boat; to explode one anywhere near is enough. When our fellows let go one of them, the ship has to be going 25 knots to be safe. One of our destroyers was making 11 knots one night—the best she could do under the weather conditions—and an ash-can was washed overboard by a heavy sea. Our destroyer's stern came so near to being blown off that her crew thought sure she was gone; she had to feel the rest of the way most carefully to port.

This U-boat hunting has been found so wearing on men's nerves that the British Admiralty has a law that our destroyers must remain in port after every cruise for periods that average about two-thirds of their time at sea. Once our destroyers are back to port and tied up to moorings, a U-boat might come up and

sink a ship at the harbor entrance and our fellows not allowed to up-steam and at 'em. It was only after a hard experience against U-boats that they evolved this law to save men from breaking down.

It is a dangerous, hard service on one of the roughest coasts in the world—a coast where for seven months or so in the year wind and sea and strong cross tides seem to be their daily diet; a service where for days on a stretch it is nothing at all for destroyer crews not to be able to take a meal sitting down, not even in chairs lashed to stanchions and one arm free hooked around a stanchion; a service where officers live jammed up in the eyes of the ship and never think at sea of taking off their clothes, and where they sleep (when they do sleep) mostly by snatches on chart-house or ward-room transoms.

And for watches: eight hours in every twenty-four, night and day watching of their convoy, of their colleagues, of periscopes. (The prospect of collision with their close-packed convoy and themselves is a bad chance in itself.) On a destroyer convoying ships the officer of the deck has to stand with one eye to the com-

pass ordering, say, two hundred changes of course in every hour. And one watch-officer of every destroyer has the extra job of acting as chief engineer of the ship; and when a watch-officer had to go aboard a torpedoed ship, or to go in the crow's nest in a critical time, to spend hours, it may be, the time so spent is in addition to his regular eight hours.

If he is the executive officer he must also act as navigator; and as it is important to know just where the ship is any moment of the day or night, the navigator does not figure on sleep in any long stretches. About twenty waking hours out of twenty-four is his portion. As for the skipper: Every single waking hour of his is a heavy strain. I went to sea with the commander of the alert, intense type. Most of them are of that type, but this one particularly so, with eyes, ears, nerves, and brain working always at full power. Three hours in twenty-four was a pretty good lay-off for him.

Lively? Our destroyers are about 11½ times as long as they are wide; which does not mean that they cannot keep the sea. They can keep the sea. Put one of them stern-on to

a 90-mile breeze and all the sea to go with it, give her 5 or 6 knots an hour head of steam, and she will stay there till the ocean is blown dry. But they are engined out of all proportion to their tonnage, with their great weight of machinery deep down; which means that they roll. Oh, but they do roll! Whoopo—down and back like that! Most any of them will make a complete roll inside of six seconds. Ours was a 5¼-second one. When she got to rolling right, she would snap a careless sailor overboard as quickly as you could snap a bug off the end of a whalebone cane. There is one over there which rolled 73 degrees—and came back.

Take one of them when she is hiking along at 20 knots, rolling from 45 to 50 degrees, and just about filling the whaleboat swinging to the skid deck davits as she rolls! See one dive and take a sea over her fo'c's'le head and smash in her chart-house bulkhead maybe! Their outer skin is only 3/16 of an inch thick. See that thin skin give to the sea like a lace fan to a breeze! Watch the deck crawl till sometimes the deck-plates buckle up into V-shaped ridges! See them with the seas slosh-

ing up their low freeboard and over their narrow decks, so that men have to make use of a sort of trolley line to get about. A man is aft and has to go forward, say. He hooks onto a rope loop, the same hanging from a fore-and-aft taut steel line about seven feet above deck, and when her stern rises he lifts his feet and shoots and fetches up Bam!—up against the fo'c's'le break. He is forward and wants to go aft—he hooks onto the loop, waits for her bow to rise, lets himself go and there he is—back to her skid deck.

That sounds like rough work. Sometimes it gets rougher than that, and then you hear of the wireless operator who was held in his radio shack for forty hours. He got pretty hungry, but he preferred the hunger to coming out and being washed overboard.

But let a machinist's mate tell you in his own way of the night he was standing a fire-room watch—this with all due respect to the chart-house bulkhead, the trolley line, the buckling decks, and the radio operator who was confined—this night he was on watch in the fire-room. Was it rough? He thought so. When he looked down at his feet, there were

the fire-room deck-plates folding in and out like a concertina.

Destroyer crews do not loaf overmuch around deck. They can't. They live below decks mostly, strapped in when it is rough to a stretch of canvas laced to four pieces of iron pipe, set on an angle down against the ship's sides, and called a bunk. Even strapped in so they are sometimes, when she has a good streak on, hove out into the passageways. It was a young doctor of the flotilla who said that, except for their broken arms and legs, his ship's crew were disgustingly healthy.

Our officers over there volunteer for this service, and for every one who went, there were a dozen who wanted to go. And there is a lot of difference between men who go to a duty because they are ordered to go, and men who go because they want to go. These officers and men—there is no beating them, except by blowing them off the face of the waters. And even then they are not always beaten. One of our destroyers was cut down one night by collision. (With so many ships being crowded into a small steaming area, collisions are sure to happen.) All hands had to take to the

rafts in a hurry. It was about two in the morning, one of those summer nights in the North when the light comes early. They watched her going under. Her deck settled level with the sea, and as it did so a young irrepressible one sang out: "What do you say, fellows, to having a race around the old girl before she flops under?" Away they started, four or five gangs of them, paddling their life rafts with their hands around the sinking ship at two in the morning.

That is youth; and there is no beating youth. We have had stories of our soldiers singing a song that has become very popular since we entered the war. We have been told of them singing it under the most varying conditions: as they camped on the granite blocks of the Hoboken water-front; as they climbed over the gangways of ships bound across; debarking from ships in European ports; singing it from behind the drawn shades of coaches rolling across France. There were even those who sang it while waiting to step into the life-boats on a torpedoed troop-ship; but for light-hearted courage has any one beaten that destroyer lad who was torpedoed one night last winter?

When the torpedo struck his ship the two depth charges astern were exploded also. Two 300-pound charges of T N T they were. The little ship seemed to be lifted out of the water. There was just time to throw over a few life rafts and take a high dive after the rafts. There was no time to get an S O S message away before the ship went down; so there they were—a November night in northern waters, more than half their crew known to be dead, their ship sunk, no other ship near and no hope of one coming near. It was about as tough a case as men could be expected to face and hope to live. But there was a boy there—he was jouncing up and down in the water to keep warm, and jouncing up and down he was singing (from out of the dark they heard him), singing cheerfully:

"O boy, O boy, where do we go from here!"

It is the thing spoken of in the early part of this book. Material is a great thing; but personnel has it beaten a dozen ways. Paul Jones with his capable seagoers in his little sloop-of-war could raise the devil with the enemy. Paul Jones with a line of battleships and forty

crews of men without spirit would not have caused them ten minutes' loss of sleep. That singing lad in northern waters was worth a dozen guns.

Our destroyers went over there at a time when the U-boats were sinking more tonnage in one month than Great Britain was building in four; and because of U-boat activities the loss of ships in the usual marine ways was far beyond normal. To the weary British our fellows brought a fresh vigor, a new aggressiveness.

Only half a dozen were in that first group, but other groups followed, and groups are still following. They have not driven the U-boats from under the seas, but they have made it possible for merchant ships to live in that part of the ocean they are covering.

Somebody has broken into print somewhere to say that Germany has trouble getting U-boat crews; that men have to be driven into U-boats to man them. What a queer idea of human courage people who say such things have! There are always volunteers, probably always will be—plenty of volunteers for any dangerous serivce. If the U-boat crews were

the kind that have to be driven to sea, there would be no great harm in them. But they are not that kind. They have courage, and they have skill, and because they have courage and skill they are dangerous.

After a year of the U-boat drive England saw a danger of being some day starved out; and with England starved out, our army might as well have stayed on this side last summer; but though the drive is still on, England is not yet starved out, for much of which comfort they can thank the officers and men of our little destroyer flotilla.

At a time when England was worn and weary with the U-boat game, our fellows went over to hearten them up; and they are still heartening them up; and, besides heartening them up, they are getting the U-boats regularly. How many they are getting I could not say, even if I knew; but one of our vice-admirals has publicly stated that they once got five in one day. And with malice toward none, let us hope for more days like it.

THE MARINES HAVE LANDED——

IT was a little girl at home, not old enough to read long words, but able to read a picture, as she put it; and there was a print of a company of marines leaving one of our navy-yards, and she said: "The marine soldiers going away—more trouble somewheres, isn't there, papa?"

Which caused her papa to recall that from where he was born and lived the first years of his life he had only to look out of his top window and across the harbor to see a big navy-yard; and while he was still too young to read a paper, he had seen marines boarding ships and marching off to trains; and just as sure as he did the older people would read from that night's or next morning's paper of trouble somewhere abroad.

And always they went without any fuss. Most of us would have more to say about going to the office of a snowy morning than do the marines on leaving for some far-away country, from where, as they know by past

records of the corps, quite a few of them are never coming back. They were the original efficiency boys. They slung their rifles, hooked on their packs and went; and that ended that part of it.

But after they were gone people living near naval quarters waited for the next word; and that next word so often came in the form of one laconic sentence, the same cabled back by the topside naval officer or some American consul, that we used to wonder if they had a rubber stamp for it—that laconic, reassuring sentence! When our country erects a memorial structure to the United States Marine Corps, she should chisel over the main front:

The Marines Have Landed and Have the Situation Well in Hand

Landed in some tropic port with some hard-pronouncing name, they have, shoving off from the ship's side with their rifles and their packs, to get a toe-hold somewhere against two, five, ten times their number blazing away at them from behind sand-hills, or roof-tops, or a fine growth of jungle, it may be.

The others are not always as well equipped as our fellows and they may have no advance supply-base; but they know how to campaign. South of us are multitudes who will take a bag of corn, a water-bottle, and a pair of straw sandals and go shuffling over the hill trails for forty or fifty miles a day. And don't think they won't fight. They will. In countries where boys of twelve and thirteen pack a gun and go off with their fathers in the army, they probably do not worry overmuch about dying early.

From their retreats they like to sally forth at intervals and have a wallop at our fellows. There was a corporal in Haiti, on outpost, with half a dozen loyal natives acting as policemen with him. The native guards slept in barracks by themselves; our marine in a little low shack set up on posts a hundred yards away, with a native who acted as cook and general helper. The next outpost was six miles away.

A band of outlaws rushed the native police in their barracks at this post one night, and such as they did not shoot up they ran into the brush. Our corporal was awakened from sound slumber by the firing and shouting at

the barracks. A few volleys through the sides of his own shack waked him up good. He pulled on his trousers, taking time to fasten them only by one button at his waist. There was no time for socks; he pulled on his shoes, but had no time to lace them. A marine is trained to be neat in his attire, and so our corporal apologetically explained later that he had got no farther than that in his dressing when he heard them trying to burst in his front door.

The corporal sent his native cook to the rear door, while he fixed his bayonet to his rifle and stood guard over the front door. They had it all but stove in when he began cutting loose like three men with his rifle through the door. He killed a man there.

They then began to smash in the window nearest the door. He pried open the window with his bayonet, and got there before them. There was a big black fellow at the broken window. Our marine shot him dead, which gave him time to turn to the side window, which they had now broken in with the butts of their rifles. He got one there. There was another close up whom he hit but did not kill;

and he dropped another one on the edge of the shadows outside. The cook, catching the spirit of the thing, killed one at the rear door on his own account.

The bandits had enough, and left. Next evening, when his officer came along with a squad, he found our corporal with his wounded underguard, his four dead ones in a neat row, and himself and his cook frying chicken in the twilight, cheerfully able to report that he had the situation well in hand.

They are a sharpshooting rifle outfit. Down in Vera Cruz during the late trouble a platoon of marines were at the foot of a street leading up from the water-front. They had cleaned up things all about them and thought they were in for a rest; and they wanted their rest—a hot tropic day with the heat rolling off the asphalt where they lay.

There came a ping! of a rifle bullet among them; and half a minute or so later another ping! They watched, and up the street they saw the head, arm, and shoulder of a man with a rifle come poking around the corner of a building, and ping! another one, and this time one of their men hit. A bad hombre, that one.

"Get him!" said their officer, and named two of them to get him.

The two men lay down on the asphalt; and when their friend next poked his head and shoulders around the corner, they fired. They saw the adobe plaster spatter from a corner of the building just under the man's chin; but that wasn't getting him. They jacked their sights up 50 yards, making it 800 yards; and when next the native showed around the corner they both got him—one plumb between the eyes.

It was good shooting; but there was no special comment after it. The talk would have come if they hadn't got him.

But it is not always a matter of fighting or shooting efficiency. There was that bad hombre, Juan Calcano of Santo Domingo—Juan the Terrible, the natives called him. Juan and his gang had a headquarters in the mountains. From there they came riding down into the valleys—shooting, robbing, standing quiet natives on their heads generally. Juan had quite a little territory under tribute. He came down into La Ramona, where was a custom-house and guard. He shot up the guards, took all

the gold in the custom-house, and rode away, saying: "Come after me who dares!"

The marines did not worry about the daring part; but he was too strongly intrenched for a direct attack. Your professional soldier, above all men, prefers not to throw away good men's lives. They considered matters; and one day they set out, three marine officers and thirty men, for Juan's country. One of those tropical hurricanes came along the same day they started, blew down trees, filled rivers to over their banks, and made them wade waist-deep in the mud of the roads. It was tough going, but it had its good side—there were not many people abroad.

They arrived near the village where Juan was known to be. An American marine would not have stood much chance to get back if Juan had known one was around; but one of the officers rigged up as a mule trader and went looking for Juan. He found him, taking it easy until the roads after the storm should become passable, and allow himself and his men to sashay into the valley again.

All kinds of people—white, and black, and brown—came Juan's way to do business—to

buy mules and horses, for instance. In the course of his travels in the valley Juan had helped himself to some very fine mules and horses. Along comes this man this day—American, English, French, Spanish, who knows? Or cares? He talked money—cash—for a good pair of mules. No old spavined creatures, but young, strong, sound ones.

Yes, Juan had just such a pair of mules. Oh, a superb young pair! He would see. Truly yes. Would the stranger señor come into his house so that Juan might speak more confidentially of them? The stranger would. And did. But before Juan could unload all he had to say about his mules the mule buyer drew a large service automatic and slipped Juan out to where thirty-two marines, officers and men, were in hiding. And they put Juan in jail, and all it cost was one mule—not Juan's—drowned while crossing a stream during the hurricane.

The marines have a great fighting record; but the marines do more than fight. After all, men cannot be handling rifle and bayonet every waking minute—they would become abnormal creatures if they did, of use only in war time;

and it would be a terrible world if war were our end and aim. The marines get aviation, search-light, wireless, telegraphic, heliograph, and other signal drill. They plant mines, put up telegraph and telephone lines in the field, tear down or build up bridges, sling from a ship and set up or land guns as big as 5-inch for their advance base work.

It is a belief with marines that the corps can do anything. Right in New York City is a marine printing plant with a battery of linotypes and a row of presses. They set their own type, write their own stuff (even to the poetry), draw their own sketches, do their own photography, their own color work—everything. Every man in that plant is a marine, enlisted or commissioned. Every one has seen service somewhere outside his country.

One was in a tropic country one time after an all-night march to a river where the ferry was a water-soaked bamboo raft. They had to wait until some native might happen along with a bull—or it might be a cow—to tow the raft across. After crossing the river twice in that day, the young marine commander halted on the bank and said: "That's sure not cross-

ing in a hurry if we had to. Might's well go to it and build a bridge right now."

They cut down trees, got a portable pile-driver from their transport, rigged it up and set to work. They hoisted the hammer—a good heavy one—and let it drop. Bam! she struck, and into the mud for about two feet went the pile. Fine! They hoisted the hammer again—four men hauling on pulley blocks did the hoisting—and let her go again. This time instead of a fine bam! the hammer went a fine splasho! into the river. The great heat and dampness of the place had warped the runways; almost every other time they let that hammer drop, it jumped the runways and into the river.

But that was all right. They could fish her out and hoist her up by man power again. It was when they left the solid bank and had to put out into the river that their troubles began. A pile-driver ought to have a pretty solid foundation. Ought to have! They took two dug-out canoes, lashed them together, put a bamboo deck across, set their pile-driver on the deck and turned to again. It made a kind of a wabbly base; besides hauling the hammer

out every time it jumped into the river, they had to see that it didn't come bouncing down atop of their own heads or through the canoe deck. However, they were getting action. They finished driving the piles and setting up the stringers.

For their bridge floor they laid down wood shingles, and over that a mat made out of woven bamboo strips. For a top deck? Well, it was a coral island and the roads of that country were of pounded coral; they put a top dressing of pounded coral across the bridge.

And then the young marine commander looked her over and figured on the dimensions of his struts and stringers, and said: "Some class! She'll stand a two-ton load." And then along came a steam-roller from off the transport, and the roller weighed five tons and it was important that it be passed across. "Go ahead," said the marine commander—"only I hope you can swim!" And they all camped on the bank to watch. The steam-roller man was an optimist and a literary person: "You may have builded better than you know, captain!" The bridge settled down another foot, but the roller got across, and back and over

many more times; which set the younger marines to standing on the bank and saying: "That's us—bridge builders!"

The fight in the shack, the capture of Calcano, the sharpshooting at Vera Cruz, the building of that coral-floored bridge, are not set down here as wonderful stunts. They are set down because the writer happened to bump into them during a casual hour's inspection of their records. Scores of more heroic or ingenious samples could be served up by anybody who cared to dig deep into the records. These are detailed here, because they could be briefly told and at the same time show the marine's characteristic qualities: courage, ingenuity, technic, and industry.

Here we might mention that it is not in itself an act of war to land marines on foreign soil. It was sending ashore the bluejackets at Vera Cruz that made it an act of war. To protect American lives and property in Nicaragua a battalion of marines landed there a few years ago. They had some sharp fighting, but it was not an act of war. Do you begin to see him as a diplomatic asset? And perhaps why all this landing action comes his way? Most

of us have probably forgotten the details of that Nicaraguan landing; but—unless they have been jacked out lately—a company of those marines are still there, looking out for American interests. Only a company, but still hanging on.

Courage, ingenuity, industry—they need them all. Most of us will probably have to stop to remember that the marines who landed in Haiti and Santo Domingo are still there. And running things in their usual efficient fashion. There was the usual fighting to get a toehold, the usual fighting to retain place, the usual establishing of outposts, with the usual killed and wounded already probably forgotten by most of us. Perhaps they are too far away to make absorbing newspaper items; perhaps it is the Big War overshadowing all else.

In Haiti and Santo Domingo it was the old story of political factions, each faction having its own little gang of fighting men till our fellows came in and ran most of them into the hills. When the marines took charge they found that pretty much everything on the island had gone to wrack. As, for instance, under the old French régime there had been

some splendid roads in Haiti, but now they were hardly more than sewers in the towns and a drainage for the hill slopes of the country.

The marines repaired the roads; not always using the picks and shovels themselves, but seeing to it that somebody did, paying a living wage for such work to the natives. Sometimes bandits—who are quite often gentle creatures when out of training—captured bandits were allowed to quit jail to do useful work in this line. The marines installed sanitary methods, saw that courts of justice were resumed, marine officers themselves serving as justices until they found natives who could do that service. Likewise they collected and disbursed taxes.

Above all, they did away with the old reign of terror, when no man's life was safe if he happened to be on the wrong side. When the bandits were running around unchecked, it was not safe for a whole family to go to market together. Generally the women went to sell their little produce, while the men stayed behind to guard the little property at home. Now—the natives speak of the wonder of it—the roads on market-days are crowded with both men and women.

At first they had distrust of the marine; not altogether because he was a foreigner (the tropical people probably are less distrustful of us than we of them)—he was an armed soldier. But they learned to know him, and now the native salutes and smiles without effort at the marine in passing. When one particular marine officer left there to come home recently, crowds of native men, women, and children came down, some to weep, but all to wish him Godspeed in going.

The marine is sometimes termed soldier and sailor too, which is not correct. He is not a sailor and does not claim to be. When not in barracks ashore he lives aboard some warship afloat; and on shipboard he does certain guard work and handles the secondary batteries. But he does not have to sailorize; the bluejacket takes care of that part, and takes care of it well. The notion that a marine must qualify as a sailor aboard ship has probably cost the corps many a prospective recruit.

To call him a seagoing soldier is more nearly correct. When it is not an act of war to land marines on foreign soil, it is good business to

keep them where landings can be quickly made with them. So his being kept aboard ship, perhaps. Bluejackets have taken part in landing-parties, too, but it is not to black the bluejacket's eye to say that it is not his regular job. The bluejacket's work is aboard ship—on the bridge, in magazines, in turrets, below decks. Advance shore work is the marine's specialty, and he goes to it pretty much as a man with a dinner-pail goes to work in the subway.

He is the first to land, the last to leave, and to name the places where he has seen service—well, one of them wrote a song once.

"From the hills of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli," it began. But he has seen more than Mexico or the Mediterranean since. He could now say:

"From the hills of Montezuma to the gates of old Peking
He has heard the shrapnel bursting, he has heard the Mauser's ping !
He has known Alaskan waters and the coral roads of Guam,
He has bowed to templed idols and to sultans made salaam.
He has——"

But it's like calling a roll—Egypt, Algeria, Tripoli, Abyssinia, Mexico, China, Japan, Korea, Cuba, Porto Rico, Panama, Nicaragua, Haiti, Santo Domingo, Alaska, the Philippines, Formosa, Sumatra, Hawaii, Samoa, Guam—like calling the roll of tropic countries and a few less warm to say where he has been.

He has been most everywhere, done most everything. Did you ever see any mounted marines? There is a guard of mounted marines right now with the legation in Peking; and once a platoon of marines, on duty in Africa, not being able to get big enough horses, rode camels through the wilds of Abyssinia to the palace of old Menelik.

In speaking here of the marines, no man or officer has been named. That is done of a purpose. In talking of the corps, from the topsiders down—generals, colonels, majors, captains, lieutenants, and enlisted men—one fact stuck out: They all played up the corps. All individuals—officers and men—were made subordinate to the corps. So here, taking the tip, no names are named. A soldier speaks of his regiment, a bluejacket of his ship. The Marine Corps is made up of companies, regiments, bat-

talions, divisions; but it is the corps of which the marine always speaks.

If you ask the members of any other outfit to name the model military unit, they may name their own branch of the service first; but if they do, it is almost a sure bet that they will name the United States Marine Corps next. When they do not name themselves first, they name the marines first. And this does not apply to outfits in this country alone.

By the look of things now, there probably will be plenty of war before we are done. If any young fellow is wishful to be in the middle of it, we would say: Consider the marines. You may not see them mentioned every morning in the press reports, but be sure of this—they are there and on the job.

THE NAVY AS A CAREER

A YOUNG fellow reading all this stuff about the doings of our destroyers might be inclined to look on the navy as pure adventure, which would not be to get it quite right. The adventure is there, but there is something more.

The navy will take a young man, feed and clothe him, give him a good all-round training, and while he is yet in middle age retire him with at least $60 a month for the rest of his life. No matter how low his rating has been, that $60 a month is certain after his thirty years of service; while, if he has shown moderate intelligence and ambition, he can count on close to $100 a month, and this without his having ever been a commissioned officer. The years after his retirement he may spend as he pleases—go into business, get another job, and make another wage on top of his pension. He can go to jail if he prefers: whatever he does, always there is that sheet-anchor of a pension to windward.

Apart from the fighting end of it, most of us possibly do not know just what navy life means to-day. We all know that man-of-war's men no longer lie out on rolling yardarms to reef salt-crusted sails in gales of wind; but in what else lies the difference? Some of us, possibly, do not know that.

The navy still wants men with the seagoing instinct—men who can sailorize, who can hand, splice, and steer; but more than ever the navy is looking for men who can do other things. The navy wants ship-fitters, blacksmiths, plumbers, electricians, wireless operators, carpenters, boiler-makers, painters, printers, storekeepers, bakers, cooks, stewards, drug clerks; even as it wants gunners, boatmen, quartermasters, sailmakers, firemen, oilers, and it will take clarinet, trombone, and cornet players and the like for the ship's band.

If a man has no trade the navy will teach him one. There are navy schools for electricians, shipwrights, ship-fitters, carpenters, painters, coppersmiths, ship's cooks, bakers, stewards, and musicians. There are schools where yeomen (ship's clerks) are taught all about departmental papers; there is a Hospital

Corps school; an aeronautic school; a school for deep-sea diving. (There are no schools for blacksmiths or boiler-makers; these must have mastered their trades before enlistment.)

When a young fellow enlists he is sent to one of several naval training-stations. Here they are quartered in barracks—well-aired, well-lighted, well-heated buildings. At one place, where the climate is mild, the boys sleep in barracks in bungalows with upper sides of canvas, which are rolled down to let in sun and air in fine weather and laced up against bad weather.

At all training-stations there are mess-halls, reading-rooms, libraries; also gymnasiums, athletic fields, and ball parks. At all stations there are setting-up drills, gymnastic, swimming and signal exercises, ship and boat training. The men go on hikes, fight sham battles, dig trenches. Line-officers give them advice which will be of use to them on shipboard later; service doctors and chaplains hand them hygienic and moral truths that will be of use to them anywhere at any time.

A recruit goes from the training-school to a cruising ship, where he may find himself—ac-

cording to his work—doing watch duty four hours on to eight hours off; or working at hours like a man ashore—turning to at eight or nine o'clock and knocking off at four or five or six o'clock in the afternoon.

War-ships formerly meant close living quarters; and ships formerly went off on cruises on which the men sometimes did not set foot on shore for six months or a year, and quite often they had to go for months without taste of fresh meat or vegetables. Those days are gone. Ships still make long cruises from home, but they do not keep the sea as they used to. Service regulations require that men now be given a run ashore once in three months; and "beef boats" travel with all fleets.

The everlasting holystoning of wooden decks and the dim lanterns hung at intervals from low-hanging beams—they are gone. The only dim lanterns now are the "battle-lanterns" in use at night war practice; and they are swung to steel bulkheads by electric wires. Quarter-decks, forecastle heads, and bridges are still planked on the big ships, and such do still have to be holystoned on special days; but the great stretches between decks are now laid in lino-

leum on the hard steel itself; electric lights are all over the ship, and, as for the low beams, the new big ships are so high-girdered that hammock-hooks on the berth-deck have to be made extra long so the men won't have to get stepladders to turn in. A battleship nowadays is about 600 feet long, 100 feet wide, has seven or eight decks, with turrets, bridges, military masts, and smoke-pipes topside. Between decks are magazines, storerooms, engine-rooms, boiler-rooms, dynamo-rooms, mess-rooms, ice-rooms, repair-shops, staterooms, office-rooms, sick-bays, galleys, laundries, pantries—but only ship-constructors can tell you offhand how many hundreds of compartments are below decks of a present-day big war-ship.

She is a great workshop, an office-structure, a big power-plant, a floating hotel—and a few other things. But above all she is meant to be a home for ten or twelve hundred officers and men.

A man may not be given duty on a battleship or battle cruiser; he may be sent to a scout cruiser or a beef boat or a gunboat, which, being smaller, will bounce and roll around more in heavy weather and not offer so much room

to move around in; but he will get used to the bouncing around, and always he will find some variety and some comfort in his daily life.

That item of comfort might as well be counted in as important. It is something to know that, no matter what else happens, there are hot meals waiting a man three times a day, and a dry change of clothing, and a dry hammock to turn into nights. Even on deck duty in bad weather a man can get into slicker, rubber boots, and rain-hat, and at the worst be almost comfortable.

Navy life is not meant to be a perpetual entertainment—not though they do hold regular smokers on the quarter-decks of the big ships. To lie for months off a tropic port waiting for something to happen—that is not exhilarating; and coaling ship, even with the band playing—that is no joy. But the watching of tropic ports passes; and the ship has to steam many a mile before she must be coaled again. So, taking it in the long perspective, it is a moderately varied life, an outdoor life, and under hygienic conditions of the best. Right now, war with us, there is going to be some danger; but we are assuming that any man who

thinks of joining the navy is prepared for a little danger.

A man may enlist in the navy up to thirty-five years of age, provided he is at least 5 feet 4 inches tall, weighs 128 pounds, has a 33-inch chest, possesses normal vision, a moderate number of sound teeth, is free from disease or deformity, and is an American citizen. Sometimes men shy on some measurement are passed if above average otherwise. A boy seventeen (the youngest enlistment age) must be 5 feet 2 inches and weigh 110 pounds. When a boy or a man enlists he goes at once on the pay-roll. With his pay goes a clothing allowance sufficient to cover all service demands; with his pay also goes nourishing and abundant food.

Enlistments are of four years for men. A boy's enlistment runs to his majority. A man may work up to be a C. P. O. (chief petty officer) in his first enlistment. The navy is full of men who have done that. During this war many a recruit should make his C. P. O. quickly, for there is nothing in the Regulations to prevent a recruit from making his C. P. O. overnight. The habit of most officers is to rate

up good men in their divisions as fast as vacancies will permit.

A C. P. O.'s base pay may run up to $77 a month. With re-enlistment that base pay is increased. A man re-enlisting without delay gets a bounty of four months' pay. (Figure that extra re-enlistment money—four months' pay every four years, the same with interest at the navy savings-account rate of 4 per cent—and see what it amounts to after thirty years' service.) That extra re-enlistment money is not figured into the pension probabilities, as stated in the beginning of this article. Consider that and then consider how many men have to work until they are too old to work any further and who, after all their years of labor, go on the scrap-heap without a dollar against the poverty of their old age.

Besides the base pay of a man's rating there is extra money for men doing special work. (Neither has this been reckoned in the pension possibilities.) Certain gun-pointers, gun-captains, coxswains, stewards, and cooks get extra money up to $10 a month. Men in submarines get $1 extra for every day their boat submerges up to $15 a month. Men acting as mail-clerks

draw up to $30 a month extra; ship's tailors up to $20 a month extra. Men in the Flying Corps get 50 per cent more than the base pay their rating calls for. Every man in the service draws a small extra sum for good conduct.

A chief petty officer is not the highest rating of the enlisted service. There is a most efficient body of men called warrant-officers, who wear a sword, are called "Mr.," and draw up to $2,400 a year. There are warrant boatswains, gunners, machinists, carpenters, pharmacists, and pay-clerks. But they must remain in service, even as most commissioned officers, till they are sixty-four, before they draw their pension of three-quarters pay. Also, like commissioned officers, they get no clothing allowance and have to pay for their food.

The matter of becoming a commissioned officer may interest the recruit. One hundred appointments may be made to Annapolis every year from among the younger enlisted men of the navy. Young fellows who wish to try for this are given special opportunities for study. The proviso that an applicant must be under twenty years of age and have been at least one year in service to make Annapolis is going to

bar the way to some. For such there is another way—warrant. A warrant boatswain, gunner, or machinist of four years' standing and still under thirty-five years of age may take an examination for ensign. Twelve warrant-officers may be made ensigns annually. If they pass, they thereafter go on up exactly as any Annapolis graduate. A warrant pay-clerk may go up to be junior paymaster, where he will rank with an ensign.

The foregoing is for the business or ambitious side. Somebody may ask: Will the young fellow who looks on the navy as a business proposition make a good fighting man?

Well, in the judgment of men who study the game, almost any young fellow you meet along the street has it in him to make a good fighting man. The fighting habit is more a habit of mind than of body. Habituating the mind to the fighting game is what makes our sailors, soldiers, and marines do the right thing almost automatically in crises; and this almost automatically correct action makes for the greater safety of shipmates or comrades in time of peril.

In this book only the work of our destroyers

in this war has been spoken of. That is because only our destroyers have come in contact with enemy ships; but all along the line the personnel is of equal caliber.

Our navy is crowded with men who will face any danger. Some years ago one of our battleships was on the battle-range, with bags of powder stowed in her turrets to save time in loading and firing the guns. A spark got to the bags of powder. There was an explosion and a fire. Directly underneath was the handling-room. Burning pieces of cloth fell from the turret down into the handling-room. The crew of that handling-room could have jumped into the passageway, made their way up a ladder, and so on to the free and safe air of the open deck. What they did was to stand by to stamp out what fire they could.

Leading from the handling-room were the magazines. The doors of the magazines were open. Men jumped into the magazines and buttoned the keys of the bulkhead doors so that there would be no crevice for sparks. In doing that they locked themselves in; and once in they had to stay in. Above them, they knew, was a turret full of men and officers dead

and dying; they knew that fire was raging around them, too, and that the next thing would be for the people outside to flood the magazines. The magazines were flooded; when things were under control and the doors opened, the water in the magazines was up to the men's necks.

While that was going on below decks, in the turret were other men and officers, including the chaplain, not knowing what was going on below, and expecting every moment to be blown up into the sky; but there they were, easing the last moments of the men who were not already dead. Thirty all told were killed in the turret. All concerned behaved well, but no better than they were expected to behave.

A few years ago there was a destroyer off Hatteras. It was before daybreak of a winter's morning in heavy weather. A boiler explosion blew out her side from well below the water-line clear up through to her main deck. Men were killed by the explosion; others were badly scalded. A steam burn is an agonizing thing, yet some of these scalded men went back into that hell of a boiler-room and hauled out shipmates who, to their notion, were more

badly burned than themselves. One such rescuer died of his burns. The hole in the deck and top side of that destroyer was twelve feet across, yet her commander and crew got her to Norfolk under her own steam. Commander and crew behaved well, but no better than they were expected to behave.

There is a chief boatswain in the navy who had the duty of taking a ship's steamer with a crew to look after the ship's target at battle practice. A target is a frame of canvas set up on a raft of logs. The duty of the steamer was to stand off to one side and make a record of the hits.

This boatswain likes to joke, to try out new men. On the run from the ship he called the roll and said: "Now, boys, in this work one of you will have to stay on the raft to count the hits. Of course it is dangerous work. I won't say that it isn't. The man going may not come back. The chances are"—he eyed them one after another—"that whoever goes will never come off the raft alive. Now, I can name the one who will have to do that work. But I don't want to have to name him. I'll let you draw lots."

He took a sheet of paper and cut it into strips. His crew—all apprentice boys, all fresh from the training-school—drew the slips. The lad who drew the short slip was no better or braver to look at than most of the others. He looked at his slip of paper and then in a sort of wonder at the sea and sky.

He came back to his short slip. His lips trembled. He prayed to himself. Then he went down into his blouse pocket and fished out a stub of a pencil. He was whiter than ever, and shaking. "Can I have a sheet of paper, sir?"

"What do you want a sheet of paper for?"

"I'd like, sir, to write a note to my mother before I go."

To pick out a few isolated instances from service records and shout: "There is the proof of general efficiency, of courage, of—" what-not—that would be idle. These were not taken from the service records. Officers and men in the turret explosion, in the destroyer accident, in the raft incident, are mentioned here because the writer, at different times, has cruised with them.

They all behaved well; but no better than they were expected to.

When I asked the boatswain in the raft case if he expected the boy to quit, he said: "Quit! They never quit."

This talk of heroism and pensions in the same breath may not seem to jibe; somebody is going to wonder if the man who thinks of the money side of the navy in the beginning isn't going to think too much of it in the end. But there is a point of view which should be reckoned with, and a type of man, of a good fighting man, who should be listened to in this matter. Why should not a man who risks his life in his daily calling have the normal comforts and his family the ordinary necessities of life?

I know a fireman, an efficient, brave man—a man with a record. One night—we were in a drug store in a crowded city—he was answering the argument of a man working in a big factory.

Said the fireman: "You're making your five or six—yes, and eight—dollars a day, in lively times like now. All right. But the lively times will pass, and there'll come weeks when you won't make any four or five or six dollars a day, and there'll come weeks when you'll be on half-time. Average it up and you won't get any

more than I will in the long run. And when I'm through, when I'm fifty-five, I get a pension, and with a few good years left to me. And where are you then? Out on the street or some home for the aged—if they will take you.

"Save money as I go along? I don't figure on it—not with a family and trying to give them the kind of food they need and the little things that live boys and girls—especially girls—care as much for as the grub they eat and the clothes they wear. But if I do spend all my pay, my family are getting the good of it, I don't go into the discard at the end. And when I'm up on a shaky roof in a bad fire, maybe I'll be more ready to take a chance, knowing that if I go through and cripple myself, there's something coming to the wife and family after it."

The fireman's argument holds for the navy, except that in the navy they get through younger and with a bigger pension.

Is there any romance in the navy nowadays? Who can answer for all? Probably as much now as ever there was. Why should substituting smoke-pipes for spars, and propellers for

sails, kill the thing that thrills us? I've seen men washing down decks of a tropic morning, and, ninety miles inland, old Orizaba showing his white head above the clouds; and some of those men thought it was slow work and others thought it was great.

On a scout cruiser to African ports, or a thousand miles up a Chinese river on a gunboat, among the South Sea Islands on a light cruiser, some men return with dumb lips and others can keep you awake till morning with the tales of what they've seen.

A nineteen-year-old big-gun pointer sits atop of his bicycle saddle, and the enemy fleet is swinging into range. Will it be like shooting clay pipes in a gallery or will a warmer wave go rolling through his veins as he presses the button?

Romance! Is it something always dead and gone, or something a man carries around with him?

Whatever it is, the navy is there to try it out, and no danger of starving while we try it.

THE SEA BABIES

SUBMARINES have been cutting a large figure in this war. There is probably a general curiosity to know how they are operated. I know I was curious to know, and, *Collier's* having secured me permission from the Electric Boat Company, I went over to Cape Cod to take in a trial trip or two of some boats they were building for the British Government.

There was one all ready for sea.

Long and narrow, and modelled like a stretched-out egg she was, with one end of the egg running to a point by way of a stern, and the other flattened to an up-and-down wedge-like bow. A heavy black line marked her run.

Below her run she was tinted to the pale green of inshore waters, and to a grayish blue above. Everything above her deck, which was only a raised fore-and-aft platform for the crew to walk on, with countless little round scupper-holes in its sides—above the deck her conning-

tower, and above that again her periscope casing—all were blue-gray.

The feeling of the morning was of heavy wind and rain or snow to come; and a hard, cold breath of the sea and a taste of the rain were already on us as we crossed the plank from the mother ship to the deck of the "sub" and, one after the other, fitted ourselves into the main hatchway and wiggled down into her.

Our submarine, from the inside, was an amazing collection of engines, tanks, gauges, tubes, pipes, valves, wheels, torpedoes, tube heads, electric registers, electric lights, and what-not. A flat steel floor ran from the forward end to the engine-room aft. Between the floor and the arched deck overhead were three heavy steel bulkheads with heavy steel doors. A narrow iron skeleton ladder led up to her conning-tower; small steel rungs bolted to the casing showed the way to a square after-deck hatch.

When all the others of us were below, the captain came squeezing down from the conning-tower hatch and took his position at the periscope.

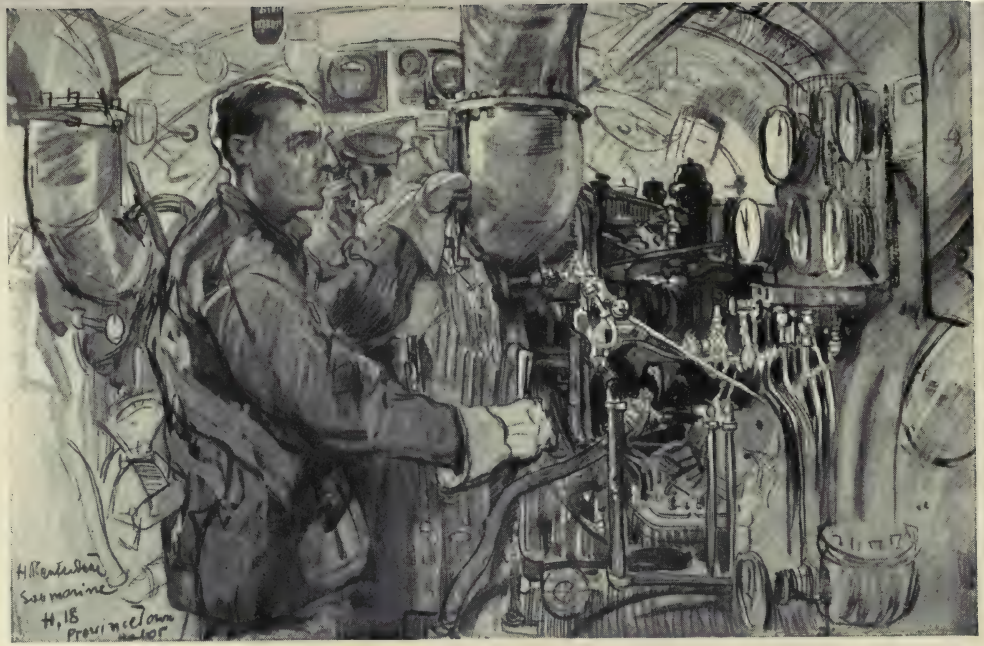
To the captain's left stood a man whose job

it was to hold the sub to the depth of water desired. This was the diving-rudder man, a most expert one, we were told, who had been known to hold a submerged sub at full speed to within six inches of one depth for two miles at a stretch. A thin brass scale and a curved tube of colored water with an air bubble in it helped out the diving-rudder man's calculations. The least deviation of the sub's course from the horizontal and these two instruments, lit up by electric lamps, showed it at once. There was a big dial, with a long green hand, which also marked the depth of the sub; but that was an insensitive and rather slow-acting gauge—all right for the crew to look at from half the length of the sub, but not fine or quick enough for the diving-rudder man.

He was the busy man while we were under water. The others could now and again grab a moment of relaxation from their tenseness, but while the sub was moving the diving-rudder man never took his eyes off the little brass scale with the electric light playing on it. Stop and consider that our sub had only to get a downward inclination of ever so little while running hooked-up under water, and in no

time she would be below her lowest safety depth of 200 feet, where the pressure is 7 tons to every square foot of her hull. And should she collapse there would be no preliminary small leak by way of warning. She would go as an egg-shell goes when you crush it in your palm. Plack!—like that—and it would be all over. Above this same middle compartment, the smallest and most crowded of all, up through the grilled spaces of a steel grating, we could see the wide feet and boot-legs of the man who held the ship to her compass course; and for a wheel, we knew, he was holding a little metal lever about as long and thick as his middle finger, with a little black ball about as big as the ball of his thumb on the end of it.

To the right of the foot of the conning-tower ladder stood the ballast-tank man; and when the captain from the foot of his periscope gave the word—after first looking forward, aft, and to each side of him to see that all hands were at their proper stations—it was the ballast-tank man who went violently at once into action. He grabbed a big valve and gave it a twist; grabbed another and gave it a twist; and another, and one more; and, standing near by,



In the engine-room of a submarine.

The Diesel engines, driven by crude petroleum, propel the ship on the surface. Electric motors supply the power when running submerged.

we could hear—or thought we could—the inrush of great waters.

A man got to wondering then what would happen if this chap got his valves mixed. But a look around showed every lever and every valve, everything marked with its own name and number. Nothing was left unmarked—in deep-cut black lettering on brass plates generally, but here and there colored-light signs, too. After another look at the multiplicity of them, almost any man would agree that it is a good scheme.

But to get back: the tank man has done his part and our sub is sinking. There is no unusual feeling to inform a man she is sinking. Only for the starting of the engines, the diving-rudder man getting busy, and the wide-faced gauge's long green finger beginning to walk around, a man who didn't know could easily believe that the sub was still tied up alongside her supply-ship. But the long green finger is walking, and marking 5 feet, 10 feet, 11, 12, as it walks. At 16 feet the finger oscillates and stops, and to that depth our diving-rudder man holds her while she speeds on for a mile or so.

That first little dash is by way of warming

her up. The officer for whose government this submarine was built is aboard. He now asks for a torpedo demonstration. So two 1,500-pound dummy torpedoes are got ready, the breeches to two of the four forward tubes opened, the torpedoes slipped in, the breeches closed. The bow caps are then opened.

The captain, during all this time, has never left the periscope, which—to have it explained and over with—is no more than a long telescope set on end, with a reflecting mirror top and bottom. From the lower end of the periscope project two brass arms, by means of which the skipper now swings the periscope all the way around. In this way he is able to look at any quarter of the sea he pleases.

Running at the depth we were then, the periscope showing about six feet out of water, the captain at the periscope was, of course, the only man who could see anything outside of her.

The captain gave the needful preliminary orders; and at the proper time, sighting through the periscope as he did so, he pressed the button of a little arrangement which he held, half concealed, in the palm of his hand. There was

a soft explosion, a sort of woof!—and a torpedo was on the way to a hypothetical enemy, with only the captain able to see that it reached its mark.

As the torpedo left the sub the rudder man gave her a "down" rudder, which was to offset the tendency of the sub to shoot her nose to the surface; when the torpedo had gone the tank man turned on the air-pressure, which blew out what water had entered the torpedo chamber. By and by the other torpedo was fired.

One reason for this trial run was to prove that she could run so many miles an hour under water by the power of her storage-batteries alone. And soon she went at that. And no mild racket inside her then; for a sub's engine power and space are out of all proportion to her tonnage. Not to decrease the noise, the man to whom the trial meant most was standing by with a stop-watch, and every half-minute or so he would yell at the top of his lungs, "Go!" or "Hold!" to the engineer, who was imprisoned in a narrow alleyway with engines to right and to left and below him. The engineer would look at a register and yell back

at the manager, who would then set some figures in a book and rush over to the man who was reckoning up the decreasing or increasing amperes or kilowatts or whatever they were of her storage-batteries, and set down more figures; and if the boss had to yell his head off to make himself heard, be sure that the others had to yell even louder. Only on trial trips, probably, where tests have to be proved, does all this yelling happen; but the total effect was to make a shore-goer feel, not as if he were in a ship under water, but rather in a subway section under construction, or some overdriven corner of some sort of night-working machine-shop, or some other homelike place ashore. The bright electric lights helped out the machine-shop illusion.

For a time during the run the diving-rudder man had his troubles keeping her on a level, whereupon the skipper—an easy-going man ordinarily—jerked his head away from his periscope and had a peek for the reason. Through the forward bulkhead door he spied the torpedo man, who, feeling pleased, perhaps, at the successful execution of his part of the programme, was fox-trotting fore and aft for

himself in his section of the ship. "Would you mind picking out one spot and staying on it?" asked the skipper, at which the torpedo man took his camp-stool, picked out his one spot, and planted himself on it, and piously read the stock-market quotations of a week-old newspaper for the rest of the run.

While this hour run—full speed, submerged—was in progress, a tickling in our throats set most of us to coughing. A naval constructor of note, who was also a shark on chemistry, explained how this coughing was not caused by the chill in the air, but by the particles of sulphuric acid thrown off by the action of the storage-batteries. These little particles, it seems, went travelling about in the air seeking a home—some place, any place where they could tuck in out of the way; but all the air homes being already occupied by other tenants—the usual ingredients or components of the air—they could find no place to butt in; and so they went around and about till innocent people like ourselves made a home for them by breathing them in out of the way. After which explanation—yelled above all the other noises—these sulphuric hoboes caused less sus-

picion and discomfort. It was good to hear that what we were swallowing was not the chlorine of a hundred stories of fiction.

The sub had now to prove her diving qualities. So tanks were blown out and up she went to the surface again; and there, while she was resting like a bird on the water, ballast-tanks were suddenly filled and down she went. Down, down, down she went—the long green finger on the broad-faced gauge walking around at a fine clip. Dropping so—on an even keel, by the way—she gave out no sense of action such as a man gets on an aeroplane. Flying around in the air, you see what's doing every second. If anything happens, you know you will see it coming, and—perhaps—going: your eyes, ears, brains, and nerves prove things to you.

But action in a submarine lies largely in a man's imagination, unless he be the periscope man; and even there, when she is completely submerged, he sees no more than the others. However, a man did not need to have too much imagination to think of a few things as he looked at the long green finger walking around: 30 feet, 40 feet, 50 feet— This particular ob-

server had no idea she could drop so fast; and as she dropped, he could not help wondering how deep the ocean was around there—this in case anything happened. Sixty feet, 70 feet—she was gathering great speed by then, but at 82 feet she stopped—a pleasant thing to see. And then, maybe to show it was no accident, she did it all over again. Did we feel any difficulty in breathing during all this? We did not, nor during the three to four hours we were under that morning. And let a man listen to these submarine enthusiasts telling how they can live three or four weeks on their compressed air, if they have to, without coming to the surface! Only give them food enough, of course. And coffee—they have an electric range to make the coffee. As it happened, they made coffee for us—not that day, but next morning going home. It was good coffee. The 82-foot-drop stunts were done with each of the crew at his station, ready at any instant to check her.

To meet the further requirements our sub had to rise to the top, fill her tanks, let herself go, and then, by an automatic safety device, fetch up all by herself. So the tank man applied the air-pressure, blew his tanks free of all

water, closed his outer valves and brought her up. She was now stretched out on the surface —not quite motionless, for the first of the breeze predicted the night before was on and we could feel that she was rolling a little. A peek through the periscope while she was up disclosed further evidence of the breeze—tossing white crests, two coasters hustling for harbor under short sail, an inbound fisherman with reefed mainsail making great leaps for home. Looking through the periscope so, it was easy enough to understand the feeling of power which might well come to the master of a submarine in war time. The sub can be lying there—in dark or bright water will make no difference; on such a day no eye is going to discern the white bone of the moving periscope; and he can be standing there, with a quick peek now and then to see what is going on above him; and by and by she can come swinging along majestically in her arrogance and power —the greatest battleship afloat, with guns to level a great city, or the biggest and speediest ship ever built—and he can be there and when he gets good and ready— Woof! she's gone. War-ship or liner, she's gone and all aboard

gone with her; and the submarine skipper can go along about his business of getting the next one.

However, the automatic device was set for action at the required depth and the word given.

In this same middle compartment—the operating compartment of the ship—was a man with the spiritual face of one who keeps lonely, intense vigils. He sat on a camp-stool, and his business seemed to be not ever to let his rapt gaze wander from several rows of gauges which were screwed to the bulkhead before him. Since I first stepped down into the sub I had spotted him, and had been wondering if his ascetic look was born with him or was a development of his job—whatever his job might be. Now I learned what his job was. He was the man who stood by the automatic safety devices. If anything happened to the regular gadgets and it was life or death to get her at once to the surface, he was the man who pressed a button, or moved a switch, or in some highly mechanical way applied the mysterious power which would get her safe to the surface.

The skipper gave the word, the main ballast lad opened his outer valves, and down she started. We knew this, as always, by the moving green finger on the wide-faced gauge. Downward she kept on going, and to a man not too long shipmates with the creature she certainly did seem to be going down in a hurry. She was nearing the appointed depth; she made the appointed depth, and—went on by. "What's this!" said one observer to himself, and directed an interested eye toward the saint-like lad on the camp-stool.

But it was only for a few feet. The indicator slacked up, fluttered, stopped dead. And then —without the husky tank boy to lift a finger— we heard the rumph-h and rumbling of the valve-seats as the sea-water was driven out of her ballast-tanks; and then up she started. Soon there she was—did it all by herself—atop of the water. And the face of the young fellow of the automatic devices was like the face of the devout missionary who has just put something over on the heathen.

Later, when you express the feeling of almost holy comfort which these little automatic safety devices give you, the manager—the

same with the stop-watch and the note-book—says, "Puh! Look here," and sits down and details—drawing good working plans of them on a pad while he talks—three different ways by which a submarine crew can beat the game should any evil happen the ordinary and regular means of getting to the surface.

She has a turn at porpoising then; that is from a moderate depth the diving-rudder man shoots her near enough to the surface for the captain to have a look through the periscope—a long-enough look to plot the enemy on a chart, but not long enough to give that enemy much of a chance to pick him up; and then under again. And then up for another peek; and quickly under again, the captain at the periscope taking each time a fresh bearing of the enemy, who is supposed to be at some distance and steaming at good speed. After two or three such quick sights, changing course after each sight, it will be time to discharge a torpedo or two at her. And—the layman may note it—with expert men at the periscope and diving-rudder, a porpoising sub can sight, discharge her torpedo, and dive—all within five seconds.

Steaming back to harbor after our trial run that day, we caught the first rip of the gale which the gummed-over moon and the low barometer had forecast the night before. It was too rough to tie her up to the supply-ship, so the sub was anchored—they carry anchors too—a short distance away, with three men left on her for an anchor watch, the idea being to take them off later for a hot meal. But after the rest of us were safe and warm and well fed aboard the mother ship, the increasing winds came bowling over the increasing seas, and the crew of the sub had to wait.

At intervals we could hear them emitting beseeching, doleful, disgusted moans and shrieks and howls from her air-whistle. But it was too rough for any little choo-choo boat to be battling around. It was 9.30 that night before they could safely be taken off. They were a moderately good-natured lot; but that was the blear-eyed trouble with making sub trial trips with bad weather coming on—a man never knew about his regular meals.

The supply-ship was quite a little institution herself. Approaching her from shore the night before, her lights beneath the dull moon and

thin, drifting clouds had loomed up like a dancing-hall across the lonesome harbor waters. When we got aboard, we found her the relic of what had once been a fine block of a three-masted coaster; but moored forward and aft she was now, as if for all time, and no longer showing stout spars and weather-beaten canvas —nothing but two floors of white-painted boarding above her old bulwarks.

She was a boarding-place, a sort of club, for the crew and attendants, as well as a supply station for the submarines which in these New England waters were being tried out for one of the warring Powers. Voices and cigar-smoke as we stepped aboard, and more or less quiet breathing, with partly closed and open living and sleeping rooms, denoted that men were discussing, arguing, sleeping, and otherwise passing a normal evening. Looking farther, we saw that down in the insides of her—where formerly she stowed noble freights of coal or lumber or, sometimes, hay and ice—were now a boiler and engine room, and a good, big repair-shop.

This night, while the gale came howling and the sea rolling and the solid rain sweeping

against the sober old sides of our supply-ship—on this night, the finest kind to be sitting in a warm cabin, we sat and, while the smoke rolled high, aired our views of the real things in the world; and the most real thing in the world just then being a submarine, we got this:

"Danger? Of course, there's some danger. So is there danger in bank-fishing, in log-jamming down in Maine, in mining deep down, and in aeroplaning.

"You want to get a sub right. A sub is a ship modelled different from most ships, of course, and built stronger to stand pressure, but only a ship, after all, with special tanks in her. She's on top of the water and wants to go down. Good. She fills her tanks and down she goes. She's down and wants to come up. All right. She empties her tanks and up she comes. She's got to. She couldn't stay down with her tanks empty if she wanted to—not unless she blew a hole in her side, or left her hatches open.

"Of course if her tanks don't work right! But we showed you three different ways to-day how she can beat that game. And anyway, no matter what happens, unless you're cruising

deep, it's only a few feet to the top. Not like a crazy aeroplane a thousand feet up in the air! Something happens in an aeroplane, and where are you? With a busted stay or bamboo strut and you a mile in the air, where are you? Volplane? Maybe. But if you didn't—down you'd come atumbling like a hoop out of the clouds. That's 90 per cent—yes, maybe 99 per cent—of the submarine game: See that everything is right mechanically with your sub, then get a competent crew and—well, you're ready."

That is for the submariner's point of view. As for the danger from a shore-goer's point of view: Ashore we make the mistake, perhaps, of thinking of a submarine as a heavy, logy body fighting always for her life beneath an unfriendly ocean; whereas she is a light-moving easily controlled creature cruising in a rather friendly element.

The ocean is always trying to lift her atop and not hold her under water. A submarine could be sent under with a positive buoyancy so small—that is, with so little more than enough in her tanks to sink her—that an ordinary man standing on the sea bottom could catch her as

she came floating down and bounce her up and off merely by the strength of his arms. Consider a submarine under water as we would a toy balloon in the air, say. Weight that toy balloon so that it just falls to earth. Kick that toy balloon and what does it do? Doesn't it bounce along, and after a few feet fall easily down again, and up and on and down again?

Picture a strong wind driving that toy balloon along the street, and the balloon, as it bumps along, meeting an obstacle: Will the balloon smash itself against the obstacle, or what will it do? What that balloon does is pretty much what a submarine would do if, while running along full speed under water, she suddenly ran into shoal water. She would go bumping along on the bottom; and, meeting an obstacle, if not too high, she would be more likely to bounce over it than to smash herself against it.

But sometimes they do run into things and fetch up?

That is right, they do. Let our naval men tell of the old C plunger—the first class of sub in our navy—which hit an excursion steamer down the James River way one time. She was

a wooden steamer about 150 feet long, and the C's bow went clear through the steamer's sides. The steamer's engineer was sitting by his levers, reading the sporting page of his favorite daily, when he heard a crash and found himself on the engine-room floor. Looking around, he saw a wedge of steel sticking through the side of his ship. He did not know what it was, but he could see right away it didn't have a friendly look; so he hopscotched across the engine-room floor and up a handy ladder to the deck, taking his assistant along in his wake. After rescuing the passengers it took three tugboats to pry sub and steamer apart.

Our C boat must have hit her a pretty good wallop, for as they fell apart the steamer sank. They ran the little old C up to the navy-yard to see how much she was damaged. Surely after that smash she must be shaken up—her bow torpedo-tubes at least must be out of alignment! But not a thing wrong anywhere; they didn't even have to put her in dry dock. Out and about her business she went next morning.

Later another of the same class came nosing up out of the depths, and bumped head on and into a breakwater down that same country—

a solid stone wall of a breakwater. What did she do? She bounced off, and, after a look around, also went on about her business.

In the morning our sub upanchored for her run across the open bay. On the conning-tower was rigged a little bridge of slim brass stanchions and thin wire-rope rail, with the canvas as high as a man's chin for protection; and away she went in a wind that was still blowing hard enough to drive home-bound Gloucester fishermen down to storm trysails and sea enough to jump an out-bound destroyer of a thousand tons under easy steam to her lower plates whenever she lifted forward.

There was not a soul standing around on the main deck of the destroyer as we passed her, nor on her high forward turtle-deck, which was being washed clean; and surely not much comfort being bounced around on transoms in that destroyer below, nor too much dryness on her flying bridge. And yet here was our little sub —full speed and all—heading straight into high-curling seas and making fine weather of it.

Plunging her bow under, and through she'd go; and when she did the seas would go swash-

ing up atop of her make-believe deck and come rolling down her round-top plates and squishing through the hundreds of round holes in her deck sides. But steady? Up on her little bridge we did not half the time have to hold on to her little steel-rope rail lines to keep our balance. She kept on going, hooked-up all the way, seas and wind and all to hinder her, and finished her five-hour run without so much as wetting our coat fronts up on the conning-tower bridge. A great little sea boat—a submarine.

Now for the personnel of the crew. The crew of the sub described were not sailors. The captain was an old seagoer—yes; and it would be a safe guess that the diving-rudder man had a seagoing experience; and one other perhaps; but the fellows who stood by the other things below came straight from the boat works. They had helped, most of them, to build her: which was one good reason for having them along on her trial trip.

And there are thousands of young fellows working around garages and in machine-shops and electric-light plants ashore who are the very men needed for submarines. There will

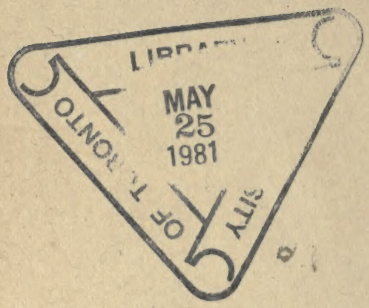
always have to be a sailor or two in a submarine; or there should be, for a real sailor is always a handy man to have around—he knows things that nobody else knows.

And so, if hanging around there are any young fellows with a taste for adventure and a trend for naval warfare, these submarines look to be the thing. They are only little fellows now, and, as they stand to-day, limited as to range and power of offense, but stay by and grow up with them, and by and by be with them when they will be as big as the battleships and of a radius of action that will stretch from here to—well, as far as they like; drawing their energy from the sun above them, or the sea-tides about them, and not having to see enemy ships to be able to fight them—equipped with devices not now invented but which will serve to feel those other ships and, feeling them, to plot their direction and distance!

Imagine a fleet of those lads battling under water some day—allowing no surface craft to live—feeling each other out and plotting direction and distance as they feel, and then letting go broadsides of torpedoes ten or a hundred times as powerful as anything we now have;

and at the same time the air full of war-planes battling above them.

Infants, sea babies, is what they are to-day. But wait till they grow up!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