

QUANT BITS OF NAVY LIFE

Some Things the Fresh Water Sailor Must Learn in the Service.

JACK TAR'S QUEER INSTITUTIONS

Minstrel Shows, Dancing and the "Foo-foo" Band—Forbidden Recreation Between Decks—Seven Bells Ceremony.

Some of the "fresh water" sailors of the naval militia have had to learn a good many things since they became members of Uncle Sam's navy. Their experiences have been those of every civilian who enters the naval service in acquiring the real salty flavor of the sea. The moment he steps foot on board ship he realizes that he is indeed a stranger in a strange land.

He discovers that he must learn a new language and cut the tender of his future existence by a different measure from that to which he has been accustomed. The very first thing he notices is that the cardinal points of his home compass are lost to him. He no longer goes upstairs, but on deck. For downstairs he goes below and instead of front and rear he finds that in naval parlance they are fore and aft.

The words "fore" and "aft" and "stern" are forbidden him. Where he walks is on the deck. He leans against a bulkhead and ascends or descends a ladder. By the time he is a month in the service he finds that he is supposed to walk with a salute not only every superior officer, but two insubordinate objects as well.



THE "FOO-FOO" BAND, U. S. S. NEW YORK.

mate objects as well. One of these is the flag and the other is a division of the ship called the quarterdeck. At 8 in the morning and at sunset in the evening, together with his mates, he faces aft and reverently bares his head as Old Glory is raised or lowered. As a patriotic citizen he likes the ceremony and means it when he does honor to the flag of his country. He learns in time that the reason he must touch his cap when he steps on the quarterdeck is because it is the seat of authority, and that his snow-white planks represent the foundation-bed of all discipline.

The quarterdeck court. It is here that the captain holds court and the officer of the deck, who is in charge of the entire ship during his watch, issues his orders. Court is held here near the mainmast, which is the forward boundary of the



A QUIET GAME "TWEEN DECKS.

quarterdeck, and the long list of punishments for infractions of naval laws, are meted out to the offenders. In former years commanders of naval vessels had greater latitude in the matter of punishments than today. When flogging and keelhauling were in vogue a captain could sentence one of his crew to almost anything, but now the rules and regulations issued from Washington cover the majority of cases. It is only for minor offenses that the commander of a man-of-war can distribute justice.

He generally holds court on the quarterdeck several times a week. There, assisted by the executive officer, he gives one man three months' restriction to the ship for smoking out of hours, another a week's extra bright-work cleaning for being late with his hammock, and still another a month's restriction for being over leave.

To the casual observer these would seem snapshoot judgments, but, in fact, they have been determined beforehand in an interview with the executive officer. When a case is grave enough to warrant a more severe punishment, the offender is placed under arrest and held for summary or general court-martial. The captain of a war ship also has the power to order a man confined in the "brig," a small cell between decks, for periods of from one to five days on full diet, or bread and water.

As in police courts ashore, punishments differ on different ships. Some captains are known for the piquancy of their punishments and others are famed, like the late Judge Duffy of New York, for their Solomon-like judgments. Many an erring sailor has escaped the penalty of his misdoings by laughing discreetly at his commanding officer's bad puns.

The captain of the old Kearsarge, during one of his early cruises, laid great stress on ridicule as a penalty. He spent a part of his time inventing new and novel punishments for his crew, some of which proved useful, while others only brought ridicule to his own door. One of his most successful was the calling out of the punishment and the crime at every bell by the culprit.

For instance, a sailor named Jack Brown, who had been brought to book for fighting, would be compelled to take his stand on the break of the forecastle during the evening hours, and at each bell, shout lustily: "Seven bells, and here stands Jack Brown, first loser of the forward pivot, been a smashing of Bill Jones in the nose. 'Seven bells."

Shipboard Diversions. In time of peace the monotony of shipboard life is felt to a considerable extent by the 400 or 500 men crowded in the confined space representing the modern battleship or cruiser. The many hours between 5:30 in the morning and 9:30 at night are not all taken up with work and drills, and the men are hard pushed to find amusement.

Cheer and checkers, backgammon and dominoes are in demand, and some even get up a little game of ball in the superstructure. Cards are taboed on board the majority of

vessels, but there are ways and means by which many a quiet game of poker can be played. Empty coal bunkers are utilized, and in these foul, confined compartments sailors, marines and firemen gather long after taps to risk their monthly money in the elusive jackpot.

Poker is not the only game played. Banker, faro, and in fact almost any gambling game can be found in progress deep down in the lower regions of the hull. Cases have been known where complete roulette and keno outfits have been smuggled on board to find a resting place in one of the empty coal bunkers. Then it is that the executive officer, who always has a paternal regard for the members of his crew, sets to wondering why John Sullivan, the fireman, is so extremely flush with money, while divers other firemen, coal heavers and deckhands are short.

Among the legitimate amusements included in by Uncle Sam's sailors are the giving of minstrel and other theatrical performances on board ship. A surprising amount of local talent can be found in almost every crew, and it is not an uncommon thing to discover that one of the marine guard has been a real actor in his time. Unappreciative audiences and the decline of the stage have driven him to enlist and he finds his daily bread in carrying a musket for his government.

It is in the matter of stage and stage properties that the sailor minstrel finds himself handicapped. The modern war ship is so cut up with steel bulkheads that it is hard to find a compartment large enough for the purpose. The gun or berth deck is generally selected, and one end is divided off for the stage. Dressing rooms are provided for each side by stretching canvas walls. The curtain is a part of the main deck awning fixed by the ship's car-

riage. In these times the naval menu is good, and to see that it is perfect it is required that the crew's dinner be officially tasted by him exactly at seven bells, 11:30 o'clock. This duty must not be perfunctorily performed, but the spoon must be dipped in to get a sample of the contents carried thence to the open mouth of the officer.

He must eat a generous portion of the beef and then announce to the ship's cook, who is the bearer of the sample, that the dinner is all right or otherwise. This duty is not a hardship when the previous hours of the watch have been spent by the officer in an appetite-producing walk along a breezy deck, but it is seldom the kid containing the sample is materially lightened of its load.

If the ceremony answers no other purpose it certainly forms a picturesque scene to see a nattily-uniformed officer eating bean soup out of a tin pan in full view of chance visitors, who are generally of the fair sex. It is especially amusing when this kind that serve to lend an air of originality to life in the United States naval service, and to make the officers and sailors a class apart.

A COLLAPSED ROOM.

Ravages of Drought and Business Depression in Australia.

The few items of news that appeared at intervals about the great drought in Australia during the last summer conveyed but a faint idea of the reality, either of the suffering it caused or of the commercial injury inflicted, relates the New York Sun.

It is a fact that not less than 8,000,000 sheep perished of hunger and thirst in New South Wales alone, perhaps the best measurement of the effect of the drought. The scorching suns of the Australasian skies. The other colonies suffered in the same way, with the result that the stock of sheep has been steadily diminishing and is now estimated at 104,000,000, against 124,000,000 in 1891 and 129,000,000 in 1892. The effect on the value of the wool output has been serious. For the season of 1893 the total value reached over \$117,000,000, and in 1896, \$115,875,000, but the total for the current year is estimated to be the lowest since 1889 and there has been a decline in the quantity produced every year since 1894.

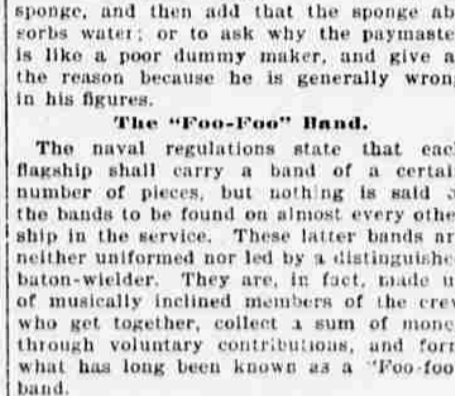
The prospect opened up by the retrogression thus manifested in the wool article, against Australian trade is causing the British financiers interested in Australian investments a good deal of anxiety. The other articles of Australian export, such as cheese, butter, dead meats and horses and cattle, have to meet the competition of other countries, and taken together with the exports of gold and coal, are about the only things they have to meet their liabilities.

The cry, as everywhere else, is for a larger market and better prices. The home market expands very slowly and is not increasing in purchasing capacity, while immigration has almost ceased. The two great troubles of Australia are its remoteness from the European and American markets and the colossal indebtedness that has been piled up by all the colonies, aggregating \$1,127,332,000 for barely 5,000,000 of population. Railways and other public works for a population far beyond their resources were constructed with these borrowed millions and now there is lessening use for the former and the burden of the latter is beyond the means of the colonies. In other words, the country has been artificially developed and is now suffering the penalty of improvidence.

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Confidence Game on the Bay.

Chicago Tribune. Mr. Tucker-Tommy, you know, is generally considered the best player for firecrackers and torpedoes on the Fourth. Suppose, now, this year you devote one half of it to the relief of the families of the soldiers who have gone to the war. It will do a great deal more good



INSPECTING THE CREW'S DINNER (A DAILY 7-BELLS CEREMONY).

To those who have had experience the sole mission of these "Foo-foo" bands seems to be the murder of all peace and quiet. The band, consisting generally of a couple of guitars, a banjo, tambourine, snare drum, several brass horns and a triangle or two, assemble on the forecastle after supper and plays a weird collection of airs to the satisfaction of the members and the great amusement of neighboring ships. It is a harmless diversion, and a good sounding of taps at 9:30 ceases it from becoming a burden.

The music of the "Foo-foo" band is charming compared to that rendered by the accordion players found on every ship. Accordion are known as "in and out fiddlers" in the service, and they are generally played by Scandinavian members of the crew. If there is anything more doleful or annoying than a Danish air played on a German accordion it is yet to be found. There is a tradition in the service that many years ago a marine attached to one of our war ships was foolhardy enough to practice on a flute one evening. He never got beyond the second note.

Allied to music as a means of amusement is dancing. Sailors are naturally nimble-footed, and it does not take long for them to acquire the art. After the flaming lamp is lighted in the evening on board the flagship the band, using stringed instruments, plays popular airs and the port gangway is given over to the members of the crew who wish to dance. Starg parties only are allowed except when the officers give a dance and reception to their fair friends ashore. In quadrilles and all square dances the "woman" is designated by a piece of spun yarn fastened about the left arm.

Dinner Inspection.

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Contractors are required to furnish good food and the naval cooks are compelled to cook it in a palatable manner. The old regime moulty biscuit, rancid soup and salt horse with an odor like a Chinese war missile were supposed to be good enough for the man forward. He got what the authorities wished to see in the nickles and dimes, an extra dose of the "cat" was added to his portion.

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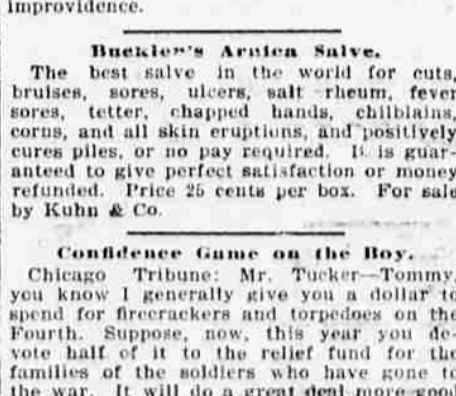
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GETTING RICH OFF THE ARMY

Sutlers and Others Going Money at the Chickamauga Military Camp.

A KLONDIKE FOR PUSHING PEDDLERS

How the Thrifty Make Advantage of the Golden Opportunity—The Biggest Snag—the South Ever Struck.

Although the festive sutlers of civil war fame—the vultures who follow in the wake of armies—have been excluded from the army in Cuba and from military camps, they have swarmed on the edges of the reservation and are doing the fabled land office business. A correspondent of the Baltimore American, who has made the rounds of the camps of the sutlers, gives an interesting account of their methods and their prosperity.

Sutlers among the numerous camps at Chickamauga, he writes, struck a rich little Klondike without going to the expense of rigging themselves out with frigid zone paraphernalia. An army camp of any size without a sutler, with his well-stocked store, would not be an up-to-date affair; hence, not a success from one point of view. Many a retired merchant today owes his fortune to the handsome little start he received during the strife back in the sixties, as he raised his hand to the dimes of the hungry and thirsty soldiers, to whom a sutler's wagon was a most welcome guest.

During the first week of the volunteer army's stay at Chickamauga, the sutler alone took in enough money to pay for his outfit, including the horse and wagon, and was something like \$50 ahead. He was a traveling salesman for a New York house, and quite a success in his line. He followed an Indiana regiment of volunteers to Chickamauga with the intention of enlisting at the first opportunity. He changed his mind at meeting a busy lemonade vender in a shady spot on the roadside. This day he is bargained for an outfit, and today he is doubtless worth \$3,000 or \$4,000, if not more, in hard cash.

Shut Out at Tampa. At Tampa the sutler hasn't the opportunity to make money as rapidly as at Chickamauga. The camps at Tampa are near the city, while the camps at Chickamauga are miles distant from Chattanooga, the nearest city. Through an unfortunate circumstance, the soldier at Chickamauga is not allowed outside the camp, except by special permission, and then only for a time sufficient to visit Chattanooga, make his purchases, return straightway and report to his commanding officer. This right rule with soldiers at Tampa, the sutler's market is shut out.

The American's correspondent, who accompanied the Fifth Maryland regiment, was picked up along the dusty and hot road-side by a water on the way to camp. The day the regiment arrived, the correspondent was assured by the "knowing ones" in Baltimore that Chickamauga Park was three miles from Chattanooga, and reached by easy stages. The sutler's wagon, bearing the regiment pulled in at a busy place called Chico, Colonel Coate was told that a wreck at Rossville, three miles distant, had blocked the way to Chickamauga, and that the Fifth were probably to spend the day aboard the train. It was hot enough to cook eggs on the cross-ties and water was conspicuous by its absence. The two days' rations, dealt out at Pimlico, had about been exhausted and food was the cry.

After walking an hour or so I was told that the park was about ten miles distant. A carriage was not to be had for love or money. So far as the sutler was concerned, the tracks were not even laid. An approaching sutler pitied me, made room for me in his wagon and in that way I finally reached camp. There appeared to be hundreds of similar wagons about the grounds, but that fact didn't trouble my rescuer. He had been there before. In less than five minutes after our arrival the wagon was empty and the sutler had the money in his pocket.

All the Klondike They Want.

This is the biggest snag we people of the south ever struck, said my sutler friend, with a smile almost as broad as his home-made straw hat, that looked as though it had seen hard service in the late war. At every turn in the road there was a veritable army of the remark. Every man, woman or child who could beg, borrow or buy a horse and trap, or a mule, for that matter, had a load of salables among the soldiers before the day was many minutes old. Besides, there were enterprising young boys from the far north and west, who had temporary sheds put up along the roadside in a cool spot at the foot of a rugged hill, within a stone's throw of the park limits. These were numerous and the business they did in one day seemed equal to a week's sales in a dry goods store around holiday time.

But the most unique business of all was the horse wagon trade. Every man, woman or child who could beg, borrow or buy a horse and trap, or a mule, for that matter, had a load of salables among the soldiers before the day was many minutes old. Besides, there were enterprising young boys from the far north and west, who had temporary sheds put up along the roadside in a cool spot at the foot of a rugged hill, within a stone's throw of the park limits. These were numerous and the business they did in one day seemed equal to a week's sales in a dry goods store around holiday time.

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IN AN AVALANCHE.

A Pennsylvania Pilgrim Tells His Experience at Chilkoot.

Milton Black, who lives near this town, returned home last week from a journey to the gold fields of Alaska. He relates the Punxutawney (Pa.) Spirit. He was caught, with 200 others, in the great snow slide in Chilkoot Pass, April 8, in which Mrs. Maxson of that place, lost her life, and had a thrilling experience and an almost miraculous escape from death. He was buried under twenty-five feet of snow for eight hours, and was finally dug out alive, but so much the worse for the accident, that he found it impossible to proceed on his journey, the long interment under the snow having so injured his lungs as to produce violent hemorrhages.

It is interesting to hear Mr. Black tell of his experience and of the wickedness of the average Klondiker. "As soon as you get on the trail," he says, "Sunday school is out. There is no further use for hymn books and prayer meetings are not in it." There were about 200 people in the party with whom Mr. Black entered Chilkoot Pass. They had pitched their tents to rest and recuperate, when a snowslide came down upon them covering their tents. After considerable labor they all managed to get out. They concluded to get through the pass as quickly as possible and for that purpose all took hold of a long rope, with the guide in front. Mrs. Maxson, who had been covered up with snow once, was discouraged and hysterical. She said she would go no further. She would lie right down there and die rather than attempt to go through the case. She was urged to take hold of the rope, but would not. Two or three stalwart men offered to carry her, saying they would not go and leave a woman to die. She would not be carried. While they parleyed for ten minutes the second slide came, which they would have escaped had there been no delay. About a hundred of them were caught beneath twenty-five or thirty feet of snow.

Those who were not caught by the slide went to work at once to dig the others out. It was a slow and arduous task, and out of ninety-one persons thus buried only seven were taken out alive. One of these was Milton Black. The slide occurred at 9 o'clock in the morning and he remained buried until 5 o'clock in the evening. One peculiarity of his situation when covered up with the snow, Mr. Black says, was that he could hear just as well as though he had been in the open air. The groans, prayers, lamentations and curses of those beneath the avalanche were plainly audible. Some prayed fervently, bade goodby to their friends and gave up. Others cursed their fate and used their last breath to utter profanity.

"I made up my mind," said Black, "that I would die as I had lived and that it was no use to pray for the change of the game. It seemed to me that I got a breath about every five minutes. I had little hope of escape, but resolved to live as long as I could. The snow was packed so tightly about me that I could not move a fraction of an inch. I thought every time I got a breath of air that that was my last one, but I never became unconscious and it seemed to me that I had been there at least a week when I was finally struck by a shoveler and I heard a voice saying: "I have struck a man."

"I don't know," answered the man with the shovel, and I uncovered my head uncovered. When I got a good breath of air I felt that I was all right and I said: "There is a woman right in front of me. Dig her out. I have air now and can wait." They then proceeded to uncover Mrs. Maxson. But she was dead. You can form some idea of how solidly the snow was packed," continued Mr. Black, "when I tell you that when they had me all uncovered but one leg up to the hip I could not get out until the snow was all shoveled away from it. I would not go through that experience again for all the gold on the Klondike."

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