

# LANGUAGE OF SHIPS AT SEA

A signal code is the language of ships at sea. If the cruisers of the United States navy were to lose their power of speaking to one another the effect upon the navy would be disastrous. Speech at sea between warships is as necessary as speech on land between mortals. For years and years experts have been at work getting up a system of ship signals by which vessels could communicate with each other quickly and perfectly, but up to date no perfect system has been devised. There is not on the face of the earth or on the sea a perfect system of ship signaling. There are in existence a great many signals which are in constant use, but all these have their imperfections. Some are faultier than others. The great obstacle in the way of ship signaling is the distance. There are a great many signals which are good within eyesight, but as soon as the eyesight fails the signals become useless. In case of a fog a great many systems are thrown out; others become useless at night; other systems have to be discarded because they depend wholly upon color and color is extremely apt to fail when most needed. The eyes are deceived by the rapid flashing. Flag systems are very good, but in case of a calm the flags hang limp and then even the flag system is useless. This is, however, about the most efficacious of all and is in general use all over the world.

## Secret Codes.

When Capt. Sigbee's Maine was blown up the captain's first thought was for his private signal code. This is in the captain's cabin of every cruiser and is kept under lock and key. This secret signal code is printed in a book, the covers of which are weighted with lead. In an engagement at sea if the vessel is about to be captured the captain or the next officer thinks of the signal code, gets it out and drops it overboard. It falls like lead to the bottom of the sea and the enemy does not

vent a signal code it may be interesting to give the principles completely:

1. Code ought to be comprehensive and clear and not expensive.
2. It ought to provide for not less than 20,000 distinct signals, and should besides be capable of designating not less than 50,000 ships with power of extension if required.
3. It should express the nature of the signal made by the combination of the signs employed, and the more important signals should be expressed by the more simple combinations.
4. A signal should not consist of more than four flags or symbols at one hoist.
5. A signal should be made complete in one hoist, in one place.
6. Signals should have the same meaning wherever shown.
7. The signal book should be arranged numerically and alphabetically.
8. The code should be so framed as to be capable of adaptation for international communication.

The international code is undeniably good. It is used by men-of-war in communicating with each other. It is a good all-round system.

## Our Private Signals.

Every navy has its own signals, by which it can talk without being understood by strangers. It was this private set of signals which caused Capt. Sigbee so much worryment after the Maine was blown up. Our own private signal system is the wig-wag, which is the best known of all sea signals. It is done by wig-wagging a flag from right to left, from left to right, from front to back, and from back to front. It is generally operated by the hand, but when distant wig-wagging is done it is operated by means of a very large mechanical arm. Our navy adopts the Meyer code of signaling. This is the code used by private yachts and by many people in country places who desire to communicate with each other

the letters of the alphabet. The signal operator can make brilliant at one touch all the colors necessary to make a desired letter. For instance, Y, which in the wig-wag takes three swings of the flag, is shown instantly in the electric lights by three red lights, reading from top to bottom. Z would be shown by four white lights and W by red, red, white and red, reading from top down. This is very quick and can be depended upon in case of a fog or at a great distance. Beyond three miles the searchlight has to be used, which is a slow, difficult method, but is quite successful. The searchlight is generally operated by the wig-wag, as it can be easily turned from side to side. There is a signal system which consists of sending up different colored stars, red, white, yellow and blue, which are shot into the sky. These are read by a private signal system. It is doubtful if a perfectly satisfactory system of signals will ever be invented. The trouble is with the elements. What is good in clear weather will not work in cloudy weather and the cloudy weather signals are too slow for fair weather. The system used in fog would not be possible in clear weather, and the wig-wag which is necessary in case of calm would not be necessary when the breezes blow. So, after all, the signal system is about as complete as it will ever be. It certainly enables Commodore Schley to ask Admiral Sampson for orders and it enables Admiral Sampson to command the New York, Indiana, Iowa and all other good ships to attack the enemy at the right moment.

## FALSE PATRIOTISM.

She Felt Much as Do Many Others When Merely Looking On.

"Ma an' I went to see the soldiers go marching off," said Johnnie, according to the Lawrence American. "I tell you 'twas great fun to see 'em. Pa asked ma how she liked it, and ma said it made her feel real patriotic. She said she wished she was a man an' there wouldn't nobuddy ketch her staying to home such a time as this; she said she would be off fightin' for her country every time. Pa said she needn't stay to home on account of bein' a woman, 'cause she could go as a nurse, just as lots of others were goin'." An' ma said that wasn't what she wanted. She'd like to get right into the thick of the battle, where bullets were whizzin' round an' cannons goin' off an' soldiers fallin' all round. An' pa laughed an' laughed. He said he'd just like to see ma in a place like that. An' he said out in the corner of the back room where his empty gun was standin' the dust was three inches thick, 'cause ma was so 'fraid o' that gun she didn't dare to git near enuf to it to sweep the floor up. An' pa said ma would average sevenenteen fits a minute if she got in sight of a real battle, to say nothin' of what would happen if she was right in it. And then pa laughed an' laughed, an' ma was mad, an' said there was times when pa acted like a regular idiot.

## Beat the Drum at '95.

Point Pleasant, W. Va., special: Uncle Jack Greer, who has lived through four wars, viz., the war of 1812, the Mexican war, the war of the rebellion and the Spanish-American war, was one of the central figures in the Dewey day parade. He is 95 years old, and played a drum in one of the bands of the procession.

## Horrible Thoughts.

Maid—Mem, the baby has gone off and nobody has seen him for an hour, and, men, he left the gate wide open after him. Mistress—Gracious! Left the gate open? Then Fido has probably run away, and just as like as not I shall never see the dear thing again.

## Literary Opening.

After the war is over De Lome, Polo and Carranza can make money by issuing a book entitled: "The Diplomatic Letter-Writer—Every One His Own Underling," by those who know.—Philadelphia Press.

## DEVIOUS DEFINITIONS.

Hack-writer—A sort of literary huckster.  
 Forgettery—Better than memory at times.  
 Kiss—A wireless telegraph message to the heart.  
 Chatterbox—The one occupied by a theater party.  
 Kaleidoscope—Another name for a woman's mind.  
 Agreeable—A person who always agrees with you.  
 Hog—An animal that gets right down to the root of things.  
 Blunders—In others synonymous with our own mistakes.  
 Success—The one road on the map that leads to popularity.  
 Divorce—The only difference between matrimony and alimony.  
 Debt—A trap that man baits, sets and then deliberately walks into.  
 Quinine—A bitter enemy of the ague and one that's hard to shake.  
 Usurer—The only man who takes too much interest in his business.  
 Dentist—A man who looks down in the mouth when he has work.  
 Chivalry—That good old age when people actually married for love.  
 Argument—Something that it takes a lot of to get it established.  
 Classical—The kind of music one is supposed to like because it comes high.  
 Society—A Punch and Judy show in which the figures are dollars instead of cents.  
 Advice—Something that people rely only when it confirms their own opinions.—Chicago News.

The total number of United States vessels encircling Cuba is seventy-seven.

## FIGHT UNDER WATER.

### VISIONARY SCHEMES FOR THE OCEAN'S BOTTOM.

To Scrape Battleships—Cleaning the Hells of the Naval Righters Is Their Valuable and Necessary Work Now—The Diving Apparatus.

From the Washington Post: If Paul Jones in ghostly guise wanders around the warships of our new navy he must see many surprising accessories to the fighting forces as organized in his day. One novel and useful addition to the crew of a warship of the present time is the submarine diver. The importance of this individual to the welfare of a warship has been amply shown during the recent operations against the Spanish fleets. Speed has been the most important point in the maneuvering during the opening events of the war, and this has rendered it necessary for our ships to be in the best possible trim for fast work. As, owing to the lack of foresight on the part of those responsible, we are not provided with the necessary dry docks to enable us to clean the foul bottoms of our vessels when they come off a long voyage, it has been necessary to send divers down to do the work as best they could.

It has not been done well, but it has been the best kind of substitute that could be found for the proper article. When a ship goes into dry dock, and is scraped clear of the barnacles and seaweed and rank growth that accumulated there during a sea voyage, and is then treated to a new coat of paint, she emerges from the dry dock as clean and fit as when she made her maiden voyage. The submarine divers are able only to scrape away the barnacles and seaweed, and even then they are so handicapped by the heaviness and unhandiness of their dress that it is impossible to do the work in any but a clumsy and incomplete way.

But good work or bad, the diver has become a necessary part of the ship's crew. Many warships carry one or more trained divers, and to attain to the rating of diver requires special qualifications. Before being sent for training the man applying has to undergo an extremely rigorous medical examination. The diving apparatus in use in our navy is a costly affair. The method of its working is simple.

He is not a prepossessing sight, this monster with the huge head-dress and the glaring eyes, but his usefulness to the navy is immeasurable. He was wanted in a hurry, and unfortunately was not on hand when the Maine went down into the mud of Havana harbor. He will be wanted in coming engagements to patch holes in the sides of war craft. If these wounds mercifully fall short of being mortal, he will assist in wrecking operations when it is found necessary to go fishing for the valuable portion of a Spanish fleet's equipment after we have treated it as Dewey treated the enemy's fleet at Manila; he will be ready to help a United States vessel out of a score of unforeseen troubles that may arise when the modern warship gets down to fighting that is not all one-sided.

Theoretically, the submarine diver is a formidable aid in operations against the enemy. Whether or not he will be so in practice remains to be seen. The theorists assert that the diver can be sent under water on dark nights to grope his way into the mined entrances to harbors and cut the wires connecting the explosives with the shore; or they say he can attach mines to the keels of anchored war craft and explode the mines when he reaches a safe distance; or he can saw the cables of anchored vessels and put their crews to great inconvenience, if not in a position of positive danger.

There is scarcely any limit to the theorists' suggestions for using the submarine diver as a means of offense in naval campaigns, but most of the plans are visionary, and it is probable that the most practical use to which the diver can be put is to clean and repair the ships of his own nation when it is necessary that the cleaning and repairing be done extraneously and facilities are not at hand to dry dock the vessel.

The limitations of the diving apparatus forbid any very dangerous offensive work being done by the man who descends in it. He cannot wander too far from his base of operations on account of his dependence on the air supply, and the boat from which he is lowered could not approach very near to a vessel or harbor in these days of searchlights without being discovered. It is possible, however, that daring souls will try the experiment before the present war is over, and naval experts may have to find some way to guard against the submarine diver on blowing up purposes bent.

## Towing a Whale.

Among the bills paid out by the Belfast (Me.) city government one reads: "Towing a whale, \$5." This refers to the dead whale that has been floating from shore to shore about Belfast bay. Finally the authorities hired a man and his steam launch to tow the whale out to sea.

## Remarkable Patriotism.

There was a remarkable instance of patriotic action in City Hall park yesterday afternoon. The tramps who frequent the park held a meeting and unanimously resolved that while the war continued they would use no cattle soap.—New York Tribune.

## Don't Know.

"Dearest, will you marry me, and let me be my loving little wife?" "I'll be you wife, Ferdinand, but the rest of the question you had better ask of a fortune-teller."

## INDIAN WOMEN AS NURSES.

They Have Not Only Skill and Grace but Great Physical Endurance.

"I never feel the least bit uneasy when I leave my case in the hands of one of these Indian women," was the tribute just paid by a leading physician of Philadelphia to the young Indian women who have entered the field of trained nursing, says the New York Tribune. While the public, as a general rule, would hardly stop to consider that the profession of trained nursing requiring all the delicate attributes of womanhood, would be adapted to the daughters of wild and savage ancestry, the fact remains that Oneda, Ottawa, Wyandotte, and even Sioux girls, educated and trained, are showing most remarkable aptitude for the profession.

Capt. H. R. Pratt, the superintendent of the Indian industrial school at Carlisle, Pa., declares, indeed, that the time is not far distant when Indian girls will be regarded by the medical profession at large as the most successful trained nurses in the country. Their first introduction into the hospital training schools, after they had passed through a careful course of instruction at Carlisle, is due to the efforts of Capt. Pratt, who believes the Indians have a future, and is firmly of the opinion that as a class they are quite capable of entering the occupations of the white man or woman; that their dwellings should no longer be in the woods or on the prairie exclusively, but also in the cities, the offices, the hospitals, and on the farms. All the training at the Carlisle school is carried on with such an ultimate object in view and with great success. The first instruction which the Indian girls who have been graduated as trained nurses received in their profession was in the Indian school hospital, where during this preliminary training, they showed such marked ability that they were sent to complete their training in the hospitals of Philadelphia. At present Miss Nancy Seneca, a young full-blooded Indian maiden, is studying at the Medico-Chirurgical hospital in that city. Miss Kate Grindrod, a full-blooded Wyandotte Indian, who was educated at Carlisle, is one of the most successful professional nurses. During the epidemic at Carlisle in 1890 and 1891 she volunteered her services as a nurse, and succeeded so well that, acting upon the advice of physicians, she entered the Woman's hospital at Philadelphia. Her services are eagerly sought by many of the leading families of that city. Including Miss Nancy Seneca, who will soon complete her course, eight Indian girls, who first graduated at Carlisle school, have during the last few years become trained nurses and are now probably employed in independent practice. The first Indian woman in the world to complete a course in trained nursing was Miss Nancy Cornelius, an Oneda. She arrived at the Carlisle school from the reservation in 1895, and entered the second grade. Being of a delicate constitution she was obliged to pass much of her time in the school hospital for treatment, and, desiring some occupation, she soon became a competent assistant to the nurse in charge. In October, 1898, Miss Cornelius left Carlisle and went to the training school for nurses at Hartford, Conn., where she graduated two years later. Since then she has lived in Hartford. Commenting on Indian women as trained nurses a physician who had had much experience with them in his practice said: "Indian girls seem to possess every requisite to make an ideal trained nurse. They are remarkably intelligent, and have nerve and great courage; they never become flurried or excited, but keep their heads perfectly at the most trying and critical moments. They also, as a rule, possess considerable physical strength and great endurance; withal they are kind and attentive, following out the doctor's directions to the letter."

## Young America on War.

An essay on the present war between the United States and Spain, written by Paul Harper, the 6-year-old son of William Hudson Harper of Evanston, Ill., and printed in the Index, is as follows: "This war is prty sirus, and this is why it is, bekas at first you no the Spanish Minister swor at Mukinerly and did not apologys for such a long time. And the next sirus thing ws the Maen, and I should like to of seen that grate skoption. And then the Starving Cylobens are prty sirus to. And now we have beegun the war and many brave comrades will dide for their country. Phraps ther will not be a man in the town, and meny a muther will mour for her husbands. Ded lay they on the battifd, and ther stand ther muthers weeping for ther huzbands. They take the wanded to the hospiti and the ded to the graves. And meny Spanish ships will sink, and few American ships will singk, and we shall fit the Spanys on land and sea. And our flex wavy over the Filupeens liens this day and are army." The last page of the manuscript was embellished with drawings of one battleship with the stars and stripes flying from its masthead. Another man-of-war is shown just coming into sight.

## Addressing Members House Commons.

Members are not allowed to refer to each other by name in debate. The only member who is properly addressed by name is the chairman who presides over the deliberations of the house in committee. On a member rising to speak in committee he begins with "Mr. Lawther" and not with "Mr. Chairman," as at public meetings.—Nineteenth Century.

## Highest Trees in the World.

The gum trees of Victoria are the tallest trees in the world. They average 200 feet high.

## AN AMATEUR PIRATE.

Major Stede Bonnet Turned from Farming to Freebooting.

In the St. Nicholas Mr. Frank R. Stockton continues his sketches of "The Buccaneers of our Coast," with an account of "Blackbeard" and Stede Bonnet, two famous pirates. Concerning the latter Mr. Stockton says: Early in the eighteenth century there lived in Bridgetown, in the island of Barbados, a very pleasant, middle aged gentleman named Major Stede Bonnet. He was a man in comfortable circumstances, and had been an officer in the British army. He had retired from military service, and had bought an estate at Bridgetown, where he lived in comfort and was respected by his neighbors. But for some reason or other this quiet and reputable gentleman got it into his head that he should like to be a pirate. But besides the general reasons why Major Bonnet should not become a pirate, and which applied to all men as well as to himself, there was a special reason against his adoption of the profession of a sea-rover—he was an out-and-out landman and knew nothing whatever of nautical affairs. He was fond of history and well read in the literature of the day. He was accustomed to the habits of good society and knew a good deal about farming and horses and cows and poultry. But notwithstanding his absolute unfitness for such a life, Major Bonnet was determined to become a pirate, and he became one. He had money to buy a ship and to fit her out and man her, and this he quietly did at Bridgetown, nobody supposing that he was going to do anything more than start off on some commercial cruise. When everything was ready his vessel slipped out of the harbor one night, and after he was sailing upon the rolling sea he stood upon the quarter deck and proclaimed himself a pirate. He ran up the black flag, girded on a great cutlass, and folding his arms he ordered his mate to steer the vessel to the coast of Virginia. Bonnet's men were practiced seamen, and so when this "green hand" came into the waters of Virginia he actually took two or three vessels and robbed them of their cargoes, burning the ships and sending the crews ashore. This had grown to be a common custom among the pirates, who though cruel and hard-hearted, had not the inducements of the old buccaners to torture and murder the crews of the vessels which they captured. It was called "marooning" and was somewhat less merciless than the old methods. As Bonnet wished to adopt the customs of the society in which he placed himself, when he found himself too far from land to put the captured crew on shore he did not hesitate to make them walk the plank, a favorite device of pirates whenever they had no convenient way of disposing of their prisoners. In one branch of his new profession Bonnet rapidly advanced. He soon became a greedy robber and a cruel conqueror. He captured merchant vessels all along the coast as far north as New England.

## CARE OF SILVER.

It Should Never Be Allowed to Get Really Dirty.

One of the many things that are impossible for the untrained mind to grasp seems to be the fact that if an article is never allowed to become dirty it will never need cleaning. In all branches of household work this rule holds good, especially in the case of silver, says Harper's Bazar. The average maid finds it necessary to devote a large part of one day out of every seven to scrubbing and cleaning forks, knives and spoons that should never have been allowed to become dirty enough to demand such exertion. When these articles are once clean they should be kept in that condition. If, after using, each piece of silver is washed in very hot water and wiped immediately dry on an immaculate towel it will retain its luster for days and weeks. If by any chance a spot of tarnish appears it can be readily banished by a brisk rubbing with a piece of chamolis skin.

Extra silver that is not needed for every-day use will keep clean for months lying untouched in a tightly closed chest or trunk if the mistress of the house will herself take the precaution to see that it is put away clean. Each article must be thoroughly washed and rubbed to a fine polish and wrapped by itself in tissue paper. Then when the arrival of guests calls the silverware into demand it will need no hurried polishing to make it presentable.

If you can't be a son, don't be a cloud.

## I Have No Stomach

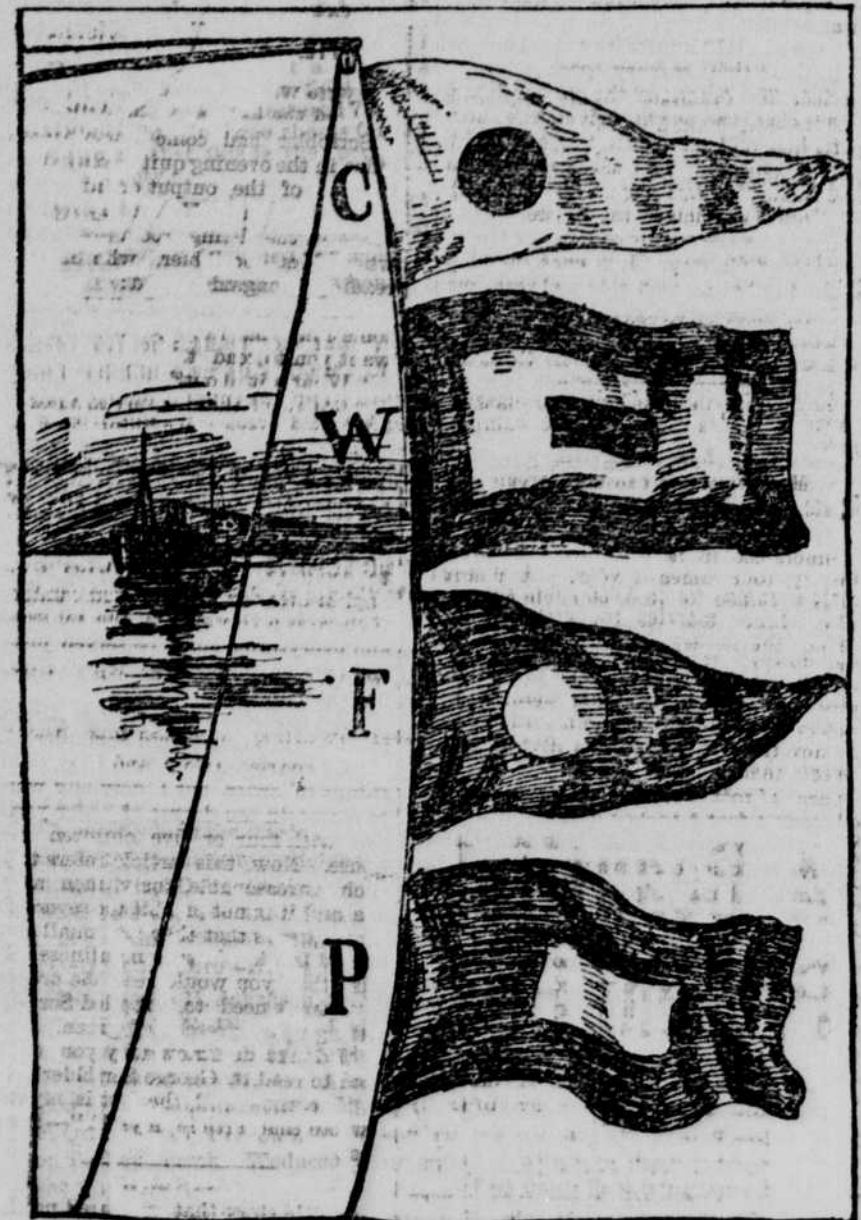
Said a jolly man of 40, of almost aldermanic rotundity, "since taking Hood's Sarsaparilla." What he meant was that this grand digestive tonic had so completely cured all distress and disagreeable dyspeptic symptoms that he lived, ate and slept in comfort. You may be put into this delightful condition if you will take Hood's Sarsaparilla.

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"HAVE TO OR I FIRE," THE INTERNATIONAL CODE THAT IS USED BY UNCLE SAM WHEN HE WANTS TO SPEAK "FRENCH."

get hold of it. Fortunately, Capt. Sigbee found the signal code safe in the cabin—or what remained of the cabin of the Maine. There it was, wet but perfect. If it had been lost at sea it would have necessitated the making of a new code for the entire United States navy. Some years ago an international signal code was adopted by which all vessels on the high seas could speak to each other. This code is of such a nature that it can be read by English, French, German, Spanish, Italian or Russian sailors without trouble. They do not need to know any other language than their own in order to read the code. This international code consists of eighteen flags, as follows: One burgee, four pennants and thirteen square flags and in addition an answering pennant. The eighteen flags represent the consonants of the alphabet and by a combination of two, three or four of these flags arbitrary signs are made which represent words and sentences of the same significance in all languages.

## Letter Codes.

Letters are represented by the flags in the international code instead of numerals. Letters are adopted in order to make a more comprehensive code. If numerals were used only 11,110 distinct signals could be made with a hoist of four flags, but with letters 78,640 distinct signals are possible with never more than four flags for a hoist. In deciding on this method the international board of experts laid down the following principles as the basis for the formation of an efficient code. As the United States only have a standing offer open to all who care to in-

and who do not own a telephone. At sea in a private yacht the wig-wag is used to communicate with the yachtsmen on land, or with friends ashore, or even with passing vessels. It can be done with a flag, a pocket handkerchief, an oar, a broom or any implement. Here is the wig-wag code as generally understood on the small bodies of water of the United States. It is a good thing to preserve if you own a yacht or intend to own one:

A—22; B—2112; C—121; D—222; E—12; F—2221; G—2211; H—122; I—1; J—1122; K—2121; L—221; M—1211; N—11; O—21; P—1212; Q—1211; R—211; S—212; T—2; U—112; V—1222; W—1121; X—2122; Y—111; Z—2222; end of word—3; end of sentence—33.

In adapting it to the use of the United States navy it is slightly changed for secret purposes. For instance, A can be known as 1222, and so with other numbers. The letter which represent them is quite arbitrary, so that the system can easily be turned into a secret one. This code can be used by means of a winker light, quick flashes standing for the different numbers, or it can be adapted to the blast of a whistle. It is the simplest and most effective signal code known.

## Night Signals.

For night use the north Atlantic squadron uses an electric design called the ardotis. This is operated by means of four double lanterns, one below the other, with two incandescent lights of fifty-six candle power each. The upper light in each lantern is red. The lights are connected to electric wires with a keyboard on which is marked all