

# The LOOKOUT



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# The LOOKOUT

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## "SECOURS"

The photographic reproduction on this month's cover is of a French sailor in bronze, presented to the Institute by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Roome Parmele, of Staten Island, New York.

The statue depicts a French fisherman in the act of throwing a small heaving line to a ship in distress. To this line will be added a stronger and heavier line, and then a still heavier one, until the line is made fast around the ship's mast or other secure part of the vessel. The other end is usually tied to a tree or rock on shore and a dozen or so stalwart men make a "breeches-buoy" from ship to shore and haul in the passengers from the unfortunate boat.

\*A breeches-buoy is a life-saving apparatus consisting of canvas breeches, attachable at the waist to a ring shaped life-buoy, to be slung upon a rope stretched from the shore to a wrecked vessel.

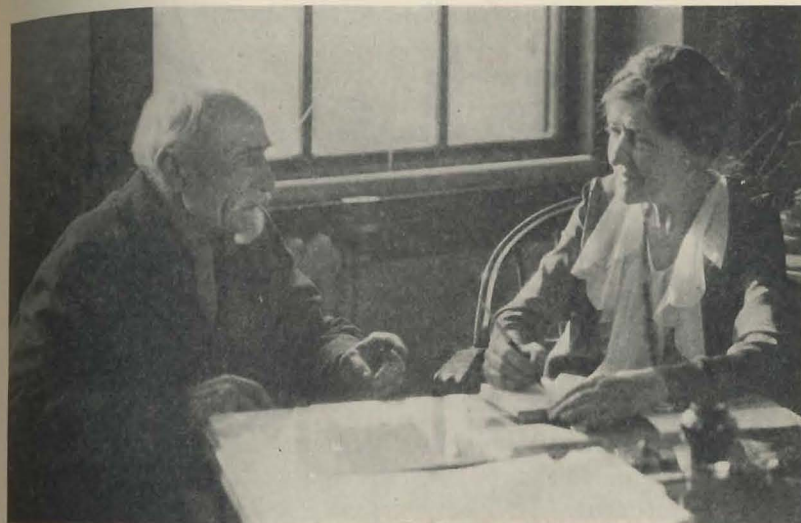
# The Lookout

VOL. XXI

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No. 8

## Memories



Captain Atwood Chats with Mother Roper.

Eighty-six stormy years has Captain Charley Atwood — he still wears that title by courtesy — lived. But today, all the storm and stress is over, and Captain Atwood can linger with his thoughts and memories of by-gone days.

Frequently he comes to the Institute, to pay a call on Mother Roper, to chat with her concerning his main interest in life — now

—his little grand niece, Marion, who lives up in Boston. "She's pretty," he says, a smile lighting up his weather-beaten countenance. "She looks like her mother, who used to sit on my lap and beg me for more stories of the sea."

During his seventy-two years of seafaring Captain Atwood never married. He remembers seeing girls who wore grass skirts

on the islands of the South Seas, black-haired señoritas in South America, blue-eyed misses from Germany, darker-eyed girls in the seaports of France, but to all of their charms he never succumbed. He sums it up in this way: "I've never married because my life has been on the sea. You can't take a woman to sea."

And then, as he stroked his beard that has long since been whitened by icy gales, he related to his sympathetic listener some of the experiences which have made his life thrilling and adventurous:

"For instance, there was the time the *Belle of Bath* burned at sea. We were 160 miles off Barbadoes when coal in our hold took fire. It was the friction of the coal against the side of the ship that did it. We sealed the coal in, hoping to smother it. After several days it broke loose. We put out in three boats. I was the first mate, then. I took nine men with me. We never saw the captain's or the second mate's boat again.

"First came a storm, then a calm. Water and biscuits were rationed. Then came scurvy. I watched the men as closely as I could, but when I wasn't looking they'd scoop up sea water with their hands and drink it. Then came death. First one man, and then the next. I was in

charge, so I couldn't let go. "On the seventeenth day we were sighted—what was left of us. A steamer pulled alongside, but we were too weak to climb aboard. They just hauled our boat aboard. Four of us were still alive. One died at Barbadoes; another went insane. You can't bring a woman into a life like that."

Captain Atwood faced mutiny once, and quelled it with an iron hand. He served as a midshipman under Admiral Farragut. He has spent six months and twenty days out of sight of land on one voyage. He has stood on the bridge seventy-two hours at a time in gales and sleet, bringing his craft around the Capes. He has watched masts crack around him, and he's seen good men die. Once his bark, the *Peter Roberts*, sprang a leak in Newfoundland Bay. The ship would have sunk before aid could reach it. Captain Atwood headed for Belle Island. As they approached he took in all sail except that on the forward mast and ordered his crew far to the stern of the bark. So they hit the rocks with the bow riding high. The masts snapped as they hit, but they made a bridge to shore.

"That was no place for a woman," he finished with a laugh. "The sea is a man's job."

## A Slop Chest Souvenir



A greatly enlarged, framed replica of the above photograph was found among our sailors' confiscated baggage. It was sent to the Slop Chest as a curiosity. Everyone who visited the Slop Chest noticed the photograph, commented on it, and expressed opinions as to who the officers were, what ship, what period, what country, et cetera.

Just to satisfy our curiosity, we wrote to the Navy Department at Washington, enclosed a small reproduction of the photograph, and asked if by any chance, they could help us to identify it. To our great

surprise, a reply came promptly saying that the photograph had been identified in the Pictorial Section as a group of officers of the Civil War period, of the U.S.S. *Kearsarge*, taken at Cherbourg, France, before the battle with the C.S.S. *Alabama*. On June 19th, 1864, the *Kearsarge* engaged and sank the *Alabama* off Cherbourg.

The names of the officers and crew were also sent us. We wonder why a sailor carried such a large photograph around with him in his baggage. Perhaps he had a grandfather who was one of the officers of the victorious crew!

## Rescued

"No, sir, nevah again," protested the tall Negro sailor solemnly. "I'm goin' home to Nassau an' I'm nevah goin' to go temptin' Father Neptune again!" "That goes fo' me, too," vowed his companion reverently.

The foregoing remarks were made in our Slop Chest, as one of the Chaplains was endeavoring, vainly, to fit a poor shipwrecked pair of West Indian Negroes with decent suits of clothes. But their physiques were powerful and large, their stature easily six feet, and every coat they tried on gave evidence that its sleeves would burst out if the wearer dared to move a step. And as for dungarees—it seemed well nigh impossible to find any that would fully clothe the huge black shoulders of the sailors.

Their tale was a harrowing



one. They had been picked up by a passing steamer on its way to New York after drifting for days without food in a 37-foot yacht on their way from Cuba to the Bahamas. The two Negroes were brought by the British consul to the Institute.

"Engine trouble" had been the cause of their experience, and a severe storm which the little craft was unable to weather.

By dexterous and ingenious use of the needle, our chaplain, assisted by an old salt who knew how to sew, at length managed to fit the two seamen out with clean, dry suits. He escorted them to the ship which the consul had arranged would take them home.

Only another example of the way the Institute befriends seafarers in storms and shipwreck.

## A Seaman Cartoonist



He was just an Ordinary Seaman, out of a job, and he needed a good square meal. One of the Institute's staff saw him sitting in Jeannette Park, busily sketching with a cheap black crayon on a bit of dark brown wrapping paper. The Institute employee took him inside to our cafeteria, treated him to breakfast, and then gave him a dollar to get ink, pens and artist's drawing board. Later that afternoon he returned with a sheaf of sketches, one of which is reproduced on this page. He confided, after a time, that

he had just been discharged from a U. S. Marine Hospital, with an arrested case of tuberculosis. One lung was completely collapsed. The physician had advised him to go back to sea, to get a deck job, and try to regain his health. The Institute Employment Bureau found him a job, and he shipped out, with his drawing materials tucked under his arm. Upon his return he promised to have "a whole raft of sketches of life aboard ship." When his health improves, he hopes to go to an art school.



## Reminder of the Past

The following harks back to the days when Dr. Mansfield, our Superintendent, was actually and directly supervising the shipping of crews and at the time when he was fighting the crimping agencies composed of shipping masters, boarding house keepers, etc.

"Dear Dr. Mansfield:

It may be presumptuous to write to you, being a total stranger, but when you have read my object and the circumstances you will forgive. I shall be as concise as possible.

I am an old sailor, 75 years old and followed the sea 50 years—from 1875 to 1925 and now as the evening of my life has come, and I am past the age-limit for making a living, I am trying to get into "Snug Harbor" but it is hard for me to get the necessary papers to prove my statements correct, and I have kept no discharges nor recommendations, only my American Citizen's Certificate. I am a Norwegian by birth and was naturalized in New Orleans, January 18, 1890. I left my first American ship at that city in 1882.

Now what I want to ask you about Mr. Mansfield is this: Can you remember the fourmasted bark *Wm. P. Fry* leaving New York for San Francisco? Most of the crew were taken from the "Seamen's Institute" as Capt. Nicholson looked to that sailor's Home for his men. We were put on board in your launch, and when we entered the ship, you were on board already with several other gentlemen and ladies. You addressed the crew from the break of the poop. The boys were called aft for that occasion. I was the bosen of that ship; but he it said to my shame, "I have forgotten the year." Could it be possible for you sir, to ascertain the year and if possible the month?

If you would like to see me and talk to me, I shall be glad to present myself before you.

Hoping, Mr. Mansfield you will not think hard of me for asking you to help me out, and hoping you will send me a short reply for which I shall be anxiously waiting.

I am dear sir,

Sincerely yours.

## "Common Sailors"

The author of the following poem is unknown. It was related to us by Lincoln P. Russell, one of our seamen, who explained it thus: "This song was sung about 45 years ago, at the time of the old sailing days, in the Old Cherry Street Sailor's home. It was at Christmas time when the ladies entertained the sailors. The Superintendent asked some sailors to recite poems or sing songs. One of the young sailors, about fifteen years old, was standing near one of the ladies. He was a bit better dressed than the ordinary sailor. He said he would sing a song. One of the ladies looked at him and remarked, "Is he one of the common sailors?" The boy said nothing but sang the song. After he had finished the lady who had referred to his profession as "common" came up to him and apologized.

"Talking of men ashore, you never hear them say  
He's common this or he's common that.  
Be his calling what it may, be he tinker,  
Toiler, scavenger or sweep,  
Then why despise us hearty boys who toil the raging deep.

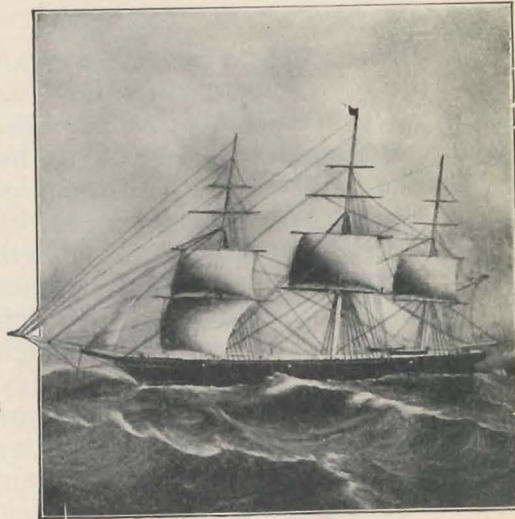
You girls of our country,  
Our name you should bless.

Do we not bring to you the silks  
For a dress to win the hearts of  
Nice young men, as dresses sometimes do?

Then why despise us hearty boys  
who bring such things to you?

You gents of our country who stop  
home at your ease,  
You little know the sleepless nights  
That pass by us o'er the seas.  
We bring the leaves for your cigars  
which deck your dainty face,  
And you would not call us common  
Were you sometimes in our place.

Then don't call us common sailors  
any more, any more.  
Fine things to you we bring;  
Don't call us common men—  
We're good as any man that's on  
the shore."



## What is the Present *Great* Need of Seamen Ashore?

As complete a shore community as the Institute is, nevertheless there is one thing lacking. The greatest present need of the 60,000 or more merchant seamen who are ashore daily in New York City is an adequate library. This fact is overwhelmingly evident to the staff of the Institute who are in daily contact with sailors and their needs.

Several years ago the Institute was able to obtain sufficient funds for the general construction of a third floor library and it was proposed to dedicate it to the great seafarer Joseph Conrad.

Because of our concern over our Building Construction Debt we have been unable to purchase partitions, books, shelving, index cabinets and other equipment. We now need \$15,000 for such equipment, which will include a complete reference and marine library. As an example of the keen need of such library facilities, not a day passes at the Institute, but what hundreds of the 8,000 to 12,000 seamen entering our building demand books which



Wood carving of Joseph Conrad in the *Seaman's*, by Miss Dora Clarke, of England. It is considered by Mrs. Conrad to be the best likeness.



we are unable to provide. Furthermore, judging by the large attendance at the weekly lectures on scientific, literary and political subjects, it would indicate that our seamen are ambitious and desire to improve their education. Many of them wish to work up to officership, to master's standing, but until we are equipped with volumes on astronomy, mathematics, physical geography, admiralty law, chemistry, hydraulics, physics, etc., etc., they are seriously handicapped in their aim.

Will you send a generous contribution, specifying it for Conrad Memorial Library Fund, so that just as soon as humanly possible we may be able to take care of Jack's greatest shore need—an adequate library? By so doing, you will have the opportunity of paying a double tribute: First to Conrad, the great seaman author and, second, to the men who live throughout his immortal pages.

Please make checks payable to: Junius S. Morgan, Jr., Treasurer Annex Building Fund, 25 South Street, New York.

## Shanghaied



Charley Will, A.B.

Back in the '80s and '90s the saloons along South Street were built on piles and extended over the water, so that dories could slip in under them at high tide and receive the unconscious sailors as they were dropped through trapdoors and convey them out to the ships which were "signing up" crews. The price per head averaged \$25, and it was considered very unethical for shanghaiers to drop a dead sailor on board a dory and collect a fee before the ship's officers discovered he was not just drunk.

It is a long, long time since such conditions flourished on South Street. "The old order changeth, giving place to the new." But, not long ago, an old

salt came to the Institute and regaled a group with his tale of how he had once been one of those unconscious sailors who had been dropped on board a ship, just a few paces away from the spot where the Institute now stands as a haven and shelter for seamen. In 1885, Able Seaman Charley Will had just come off the good ship *Newark*, and was wandering about the docks when an elderly gentleman, well dressed and courtly, accosted him. In a cordial manner he asked the sailor for a piece of brown cigarette paper. Charley dug down into his bell-bottom dungarees and obliged. "Will you have a drink?" invited the stranger. "No, thanks," said Charley, who was wise to shanghaiers.

"Well, then, how'd you like to take in the town with me?" he suggested. "I'm a stranger here myself."

"Sorry, sir," replied Charley politely, "but I can't go around in this garb."

However, the stranger used persuasive talk and finally Charley allowed himself to be led to a saloon where he was introduced to a Captain who said he could use a first class able seaman and Charley was told he could fill the job. As it was a warm night he

was induced to drink a glass of soft soda, and it was drugged with chloral. Charley keeled over, unconscious.

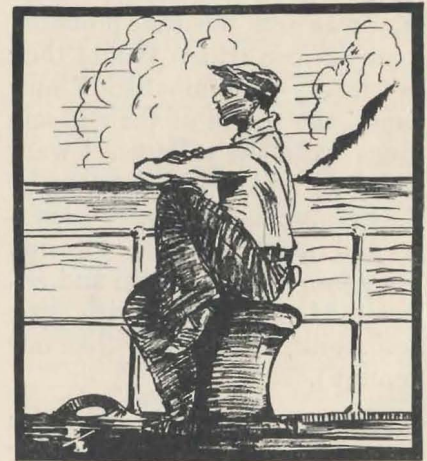
When he awoke, instead of finding himself on the *Newark*, his eyes took in the sight of a full-rigged ship, loaded with red wood from Oregon. He was hoisted to the deck in a sling made of canvas, where for two days, he dozed. Then the burly Captain whom he had met in the saloon, greeted him and Charley knew he would be put to work at no wage whatsoever. For 148 days Charley toiled and sweat, without any pay, and at last the windjammer reached Capetown. Because of the winds the Captain had had to go 64 degrees south of his course to get the right winds.

"We were a weary lookin' crew," said Charley, "as we leaned over the rail with our long hair and beards. The Captain was so tight he didn't have a razor or a pair of scissors on board. I asked the Captain if I could go ashore into Table Bay. But he said no. The walls of the city were of stone, with bits of broken glass imbedded in cement. But late that night, I took off my clothes and wrapped them in a sling which I carried between my teeth. It was ebb tide, so I swam ashore, and rode in a donkey cart twenty-four miles to Simons-town, the largest natural rock

dry dock in the world. I stayed ashore all night although I hadn't a cent of money.

"Of course, when I saw a group of people standing in front of a saloon, I wandered over to see what the fuss was about. A 'Bobby' grabbed me by the shoulder and said: 'In the name of the Queen you're under arrest.' He took me to a Magistrate where I learned the crime I had committed: I was a deserter."

Seaman Charley stroked his black and gray moustache and resumed his tale. "It meant I had to go to jail unless I could pay 20 pounds. But they gave me the choice of returning to the ship, which I agreed to do. In that country the rule was that a deserter, with no discharge papers, was not allowed to land, and the skipper of the ship which



he deserted was fined fifty pounds. Naturally, every captain was willing to pay five pounds to a policeman to arrest a deserter."

"I went back to the ship, but the Captain started treatin' me rough again, so at eleven o'clock, I swam ashore. I kept under cover and in the morning started hiking toward Durben, where I wanted to go to the diamond mines there. On the way I met an English fellow who advised me to avoid the tropical sun and to travel only by night. That night I strayed from the trail.

"For four months I was lost in the heart of the African jungle. Torn by thorns called 'Wait-a-bit,' and underbrush, living on fruits and berries and clear, rippling spring water, I found at last in the sand the imprint of bare feet. This meant that no white man was near but that probably some African tribe. Would they be friendly or cannibalistic? Suddenly, the sound of their jungle songs broke the stillness. I wandered on and found them to be the Engawelas tribe, very friendly and docile, luckily for me. They had a little village and entertained me royally with goat flesh, milk, bread, milly (like our hominy).

"I lived with this tribe for three months and one day four

missionaries from Cleveland, Ohio, visited the place and persuaded me to go back with them to Durben. It was a 24-day jaunt and when we arrived a reporter on *The Star*, a pink newspaper, photographed me with my long hair and wrote me up in the newspaper as a great curiosity, having lived with a jungle tribe all that time.

"The steamship company gave me a ten pound ticket to Capetown, where I boarded the *Gelica*, which, in 24 days, brought me safe to Southampton, England, where I shipped back to New York.

"On our way out of the jungle, after leaving the friendly Engawelas tribe, I met members of other South African tribes: The Pygmies, little and crafty, the Hottentots, the Zulus, the Liberians, black as night, the Bushwhackers, who go around whacking bushes, and the low-caste Kaffirs.

"Yes, sir," concluded Charley, as some of his listeners began to yawn, "that's what happened to me the first time I was ever shanghaied out of the port of New York, and never a nickel of wages did I see all that time. Ah, my lads, seafaring today is safe and sane, and if you ask me, South Street today is as safe as Broadway."

## Musings of the Mate

### Trunks

When a visitor to the Institute sees our baggage room he or she usually exclaims in surprise: "So many trunks!" And we have explained that seamen are not allowed to take a trunk on shipboard unless they are officers. But it remained for Seaman Jimmie Doyle to give the real reason. Chancing to overhear a visitor make this remark, he said: "Why wouldn't a guy leave his trunk here when he ships out? This is his home, and home's the place for a trunk!"

### An Accordeon

From Santa Barbara we received the following note: "I have read with much interest and amusement the article 'Fo'castle Follies' in the February number of *The Lookout*, and am sending you by express, prepaid, an Accordeon, which I hope may be of service. It is one that I took with me several years ago on a yachting cruise in the South Seas."

### An Optimist!

He had been unable to get a job for three weeks. "Are you broke?" inquired a staff member solicitously. "Oh no, sir," replied the young sailor with a grin, "I've got a quarter left!" And with this to console him, he went merrily on his way.



### Why Sailors Pray for a Storm

In the old sailing days the sign of a storm never gave a seaman the thrill it gives the seamen aboard a modern steamer. Why? Young William, A.B., explained. When a storm comes up, today, the sailors take life easy. No work, no scrubbing decks, no washing paint, no chipping rust, no polishing brass. Just sit down in the fo'c's'l and read your favorite detective story without interruption! Whereas, in the windjammer era, every able-bodied man of the crew had to be on deck during icy winds and sleet and gale, lowering sail, keeping lookout, fixing ropes, etc. Of course, there's work for the captain and the mate and the quartermaster, today, when stormy winds blow. But they are in a glass-encased pilothouse, steamheated and electrically lighted.





Reprinted from THE NEW YORK HERALD, PARIS, Sunday, June 8, 1930:

From left to right: Mr. Edmund L. Baylies, President of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York and of the Seamen's Church Institute of America; the Rt. Rev. William T. Manning, D.D., D.C.L., LL.D., Bishop of New York and Honorary President of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York; the Rev. Archibald R. Mansfield, D.D., Superintendent of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York and the Seamen's Church Institute of America; Mr. T. Clive Davies, Vice-Chairman of the Committee of the Missions to Seamen, London, England. (Taken immediately following the Service of Dedication of the new Chapel of Our Saviour of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, 25 South Street.)

### **A Belated Christmas Present**

Dozens of pairs of eyes watched Seaman Andrews as he untied the gay hollypapered package. His fingers trembled a little, as whose wouldn't with the excitement of opening a Christmas package in the middle of August and wondering who had sent it and what was inside? From the red and green tissue wrappings Andrews

brought forth three gorgeously colorful neckties. The other seamen standing near the post office window watched admiringly as Andrews fingered the smooth silk. Eight months at sea, and to return to find a lovely present such as this waiting for him! Andrews picked up his package and walked away happily, reading the Christmas message on the card attached to one of the neckties.

### **A Song-Writing Seaman**

Tin Pan Alley is not the only place where one may find inspiration for best-seller jazz songs. "The sea, the sea, the open sea, the blue, the fresh, the ever free," gave to seaman Stanley Dixon the music and the tunes and the words he needed to create a half-dozen sentimental songs. Stanley sold his songs for \$200 apiece to Rudy Vallee who will make them popular on the stage, screen and radio.

### **Letters**

#### **From an Old Friend**

The following is an extract from a letter to our Superintendent.

"The Institute and your management of it are the most tremendous encouragement to every one who believes in the power of good in this world."

#### **From a Lawyer in Detroit to a Seaman**

"Don't think about sending us any money. Your letter itself was worth \$10.00 to me. Just to bring home to us here, safe and secure in Detroit, how our good friend Michael was being buffed about by wind and weather, and still comes up smiling. God bless you, Lad, and shove off for better days ahead."

### **From the Reverend Fred-eric Matthews, Port Chaplain, Hull, England**

"It was only a few days ago that an English seaman back from New York told me of his welcome at South Street, and how much he appreciated the splendid Institute. Personally, I think it is the most wonderful building of its kind in the world, basing my opinion on what I have seen myself. Thousands of British sailors are indebted to you and your staff for keeping them out of mischief, and many mothers of apprentices are glad to feel that their boys are safe and happy when at the New York Institute."

#### **From Mr. H. G. Armstrong, British Consul General**

"Dear Dr. Mansfield,

I have just been reading the summary of the report of the Seamen's Church Institute upon its 86th birthday, and congratulate it upon the magnificent result attained—largely, if not entirely, due to your patient, unflinching devotion to your work. It has made the Institute and you twins in the progress and success attained."

# In Memory Of . . . . .

The Institute has been called the House of a Thousand Memorials. There is scarcely a corner in the entire building that is not a continual reminder of the generosity of some friend of the seamen, or of the thoughtfulness of a giver whose donations have been translated into a constant practical reminder of the donor—departments, rooms, furnishings—all these accessories of the great building are eloquent reminders of those for whom they are named.

Since the list of available memorials in the New Annex was published in the last issue of THE LOOKOUT, the following have been reserved by friends of the Institute:

Seaman's Room . . . . .	\$ 1,000.00
Prayer Book and Hymnal (in large Chapel) . . . . .	50.00
Prayer Book and Hymnal (in the Sanctuary) . . . . .	25.00

### Among the memorials still available are:

Seamen's Reading and Game Rooms . . . . .	\$25,000.00
Cafeteria . . . . .	15,000.00
Motion Picture Equipment and Booth (Talkie Equipment) . . . . .	12,000.00
Medical Room in Clinic . . . . .	5,000.00
Surgical Room in Clinic . . . . .	5,000.00
Nurses' Room in Clinic . . . . .	5,000.00
Additional Clinic Rooms . . . . .	5,000.00
Chapel Memorial Windows . . . . .	5,000.00
Sanctuary and Chancel . . . . .	5,000.00
Officers' Rooms, each . . . . .	1,500.00
Seamen's Rooms, with running water, each . . . . .	1,000.00
Chapel Street Entrance Iron Gates . . . . .	1,000.00
Seamen's Rooms, each . . . . .	500.00
Prayer Desk and Sedalia, Small Chapel . . . . .	500.00
Stairway leading to Sanctuary . . . . .	200.00
Cabinet Organ, in Small Chapel . . . . .	200.00
Chapel Memorial Panels . . . . .	100.00
Chapel Chairs . . . . .	50.00

Among the unusual gifts received from Institute friends during the past month are: A Currier and Ives print of the wreck of the S. S. *Atlantic*, from Mr. P. W. Vail; a Bible from Mrs. Anna L. Sprague Sturgis; a clock from Miss F. Jane Duncan; books for the Conrad Library, from Miss F. L. Davidson and Mrs. George S. Morris; a linoleum block, from the artist, Harris McKinney; a silk banner depicting the shipwrights' and joiners' parade on Evacuation Day, 1887, donated by Mr. William White.



*SOME of the services extended to all worthy Sailormen by the Seamen's Church Institute of New York, during the year 1929:—*

- 417,612** lodgings registered.
- 335,409** meals served.
- 822,042** sales made at the soda fountain.
- 83,534** pieces of dunnage checked and protected.
- 26,141** books and magazines distributed among merchant seamen.
- 73,241** special needs administered to by the Social Service Department.
- 1,566** seamen treated in the Institute Dispensary.
- 8,637** seamen placed in positions by the Employment Department.
- 316** missing men located.
- \$607,364.35** received for safe keeping and transmission to seamen's families.
- 13,675** seamen attended 219 religious services.
- 28,345** seamen made use of the barber shop, tailor shop and laundry.



# SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

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