

# The LOOKOUT



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SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

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# The Lookout

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## *The* LOOKOUT

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## *An S. C. I. Outpost*



OUR CHAPLAIN AT THE HOSPITAL

Jack Tar of the Merchant Marine is a sort of rollicking fellow, but it seems to take a shipwreck or a severe illness in the hospital to show what a really good sport he is.

We have just been calling upon one of our boys at United States Marine Hospital Number

21 on Staten Island. We sent him over from the Institute when we found he needed hospital care. We found him there in a sort of sun parlor, a glassed-in enclosure at the end of one of the wards. It was sunny in more ways than one.

Dave was sitting up in bed

entertaining a dozen or so orderlies, doctors and walking patients who had gravitated to his room because it is apparently the gayest spot in the hospital. He was pretty well bandaged up, but that wasn't interfering with his making elaborate gestures to accompany the story he was telling. He was pale but his eyes were merry and bright.

"Been operated on eight times since I've been here," he told us. "Thought seven was my lucky number, but I guess it isn't. Seven come eleven. Maybe it's eleven. That would make only three more operations I've got to have. Next time I'm going to tell that surgeon to cut out part of my appetite. When I get out of this place I don't want to have a bigger appetite than I can support. Three more operations ought to fix me up, don't you think? Or maybe five. That would make a grand total of thirteen. This is bed number thirteen I'm in——"

And so he rambled on to the amusement of his audience.

Dave is one of the many merchant sailors who have to be put ashore in the Port of New York for hospital treatment. The Government provides medical

and surgical treatment and hospital care, but spiritual ministrations is provided by the Institute. We furnish the services of one of our chaplains who goes about doing "whatsoever his hand findeth to do."

There are boys who want to be baptized and some who want to be told how to pray, and some who want their baggage which was left behind somewhere when they came to the hospital.

There are others who want a few cigarettes, and all of them welcome a kind word. We trailed after the Chaplain on one of his rounds. As he entered each ward he called a cheery "Hello, everybody!" And everybody looked up with a grateful greeting. An "up" patient struggling along on crutches would answer, "Hello, Reverend," and a wan drawn boy would turn his face with great difficulty on his pillow to smile as best he could.

This Chaplain speaks their own language for he shipped before the mast himself in his younger days. He was also a "padre" in the Army, which also helps in his work of befriending these hospital sailors.

He paused longer than usual

over one cot to talk his A. E. F. French to a homesick sailor from Bordeaux. He stopped to pray with an old light-house keeper who kissed his hand fervently in gratitude.

Then we came upon Joe, who was just beginning to get relief from excruciatingly painful burns. A few days before, headlines in the New York papers had told of an explosion on a tanker. That was Joe's ship.

He had been asleep with three shipmates when the blast came. No trace of the others was ever found, but Joe managed to drag himself to the fo'c'stle door and open it. He encountered dense flames and instinctively closed the door. His dazed brain told him he must somehow go through those flames and reach the deck if he expected to live. He pulled himself together and managed to do it.

The next thing he knew, he was on a rescue ship on his way to the hospital.

"My number hasn't been called yet, I guess," he told us.

He spoke with difficulty for his poor face was terribly swollen, although the pain was practically gone; and his hands were puffed to three times their normal size.

"I'm all the way from Seattle," he said rather wistfully, "but I haven't any folks."

Then he pointed to a little flowering plant at the foot of his bed, and his eyes filled. All he could say was, "Grandmother of one of the fellows they didn't find. Heard about me. Came to see me." He closed his eyes. The Chaplain whispered something that brought a faint smile and we left him.

It was time to go anyway. The Chaplain was due at the regular Sunday afternoon tea party. This is a ceremony for the "up" patients provided by various women's organizations. The boys come in bath-robos, some of them in wheel chairs or leaning on crutches or walking sticks, and here the "Reverend" has an added opportunity to mingle with them and help make their stay at the hospital a bit more tolerable.

Thus the influence of the Institute reaches out to Jack Tar of the Merchant Marine when sickness or accident overtake him. It may not be written in our charter, but every unfortunate sailorman within our ken is our charge.



Pubrs. Photo Service  
THE SHIPWRECKED CREW AND THE RESCUING CAPTAIN

Another shipwrecked crew took refuge at the Institute during the past month, with a tale that sounded more like old-time fiction than cold facts of 1927.

It was a tale of a foundered four-masted schooner, and the rescue of nine men from an open boat with an improvised jury sail, after seven days drifting at sea.

The schooner was the *Horatio G. Foss*, which set sail from Philadelphia for Martinique with a cargo of coal. For twelve days they sailed on with "never a slant of fine weather," accord-

ing to the Yankee skipper. Oil on the troubled waters accomplished very little. Much of the caulking came out of the seams and the leaks could not be reached. Both steam and hand pumps were used to the limit but the leaks won the race.

Meanwhile a terrific gale was blowing. The log for the ninth day states: "Wind so high made 115 miles under bare poles in one day."

Three days later we find this entry: "Water rising. Has reached the 'tween decks. Gave order abandon."

It was about four o'clock in the morning and the wind was screaming weirdly. The crew remember that so well.

They had foreseen the possibility of abandoning and had stowed water and supplies in the ship's launch, and had removed the engine, knowing its weight would be a handicap. They launched the craft with difficulty and jumped for it. Just as they were about to pull away to avoid being "stove," Captain Potter thought of the compass and swam back for it. Under its guidance they headed for Bermuda, two hundred miles away.

An upright oar rigged with an old blanket speeded them along. Captain Potter sat in the bow directing operations, and for seven days and six nights he indulged only in "catnaps."

"Did the rest of you sleep?" we asked. The Chief Mate spoke up. "Well, we didn't have no feather beds. We could a' slept, but every time we tried it, a barrel of sea water would jump down our necks."

The crew were divided into two shifts to bail constantly with biscuit tins, for the launch leaked badly.

For three days a dolphin es-

corted them, frisking about their boat, but suddenly he flipped his tail and disappeared. It was the Chief Mate's guess that despair was creeping into the voices of the crew and the dolphin sniffed disaster.

Perhaps he objected to the chanting of the negro cook who had his own ideas of the efficacy of vociferous prayer in such circumstances. Joseph refused to be hushed even to give the others an opportunity to engage in their own respective less spectacular methods of asking divine aid.

And so the time dragged for seven long days and six long nights of constant eye-straining vigil. Canned tomatoes, beef, salmon and water kept them alive and gave them strength.

Finally they sighted a reef, but they could not reach it. The wind shifted and drove them away. Hope was at its lowest ebb, but it proved to be a case of "darkness before dawn."

The Holland-American liner *Vollendam* was nosing her way among the reefs, homeward bound with a delegation of American bankers who had been attending a convention in Bermuda. Captain Potter set off some rockets which they had

managed to keep dry. The Volendam manoeuvred into the gale and picked the men up. They climbed a rope ladder to safety and dropped exhausted on the deck. The excited bankers gathered round to hear the fragmentary explanations of their predicament with their eyes popping like school boys reading "Robinson Crusoe."

They were having an opportunity seldom accorded landsmen to glimpse a bit of the life of a sailorman; and they came ashore in New York a day or so later sobered by the experience almost as much as the nine rescued men, who like most other sailors left destitute in these waters, found their way to 25 South Street and an Institute welcome.

### *Annual Sailor Day*

Fully half an hour before the time set for the annual Sailors' Day Service at Trinity Church the pews were well filled with seamen whose faces proclaimed them to be the sons of nearly all of the nations on earth.

Of the sixteen organizations which together form the Joint Conference of Allied Societies for Seamen in the Port of New York several are maintained for the purpose of serving seamen of only one nationality. Most of the other societies, and above all the Seamen's Church Institute, look after the welfare of all men regardless of race or creed, although we estimate that about eighty percent of our men are American citizens.

Food, shelter, agreeable companions and wholesome play are provided day by day at the Institute, but there is still the higher spiritual need. Man cannot live by bread alone.

The Institute, through its chaplains, provides spiritual guidance to all who ask.

However, it is a source of inspiration to the seamen themselves, as well as to those who look after their welfare, to get together occasionally for common prayer in a common purpose.

The time of year chosen for the annual service is very fitting. Winter storms and cold intensify the dangers of the sea. Many seamen are jobless because so

much of the shipping has ceased. Vessels sailing to northern waters are anchored for the winter months. Fewer passenger ships make the European trips. Nearly all of the excursion boats in the rivers and in New York Harbor have stopped running.

For seamen the winter months are indeed the lean months. At the Institute the "floor of the Seven Seas" is well filled.

Seamen cannot be expected to hold very orthodox views on religion. It is only natural for men left to themselves to think out their creeds and philosophies in their own way.

A sailor's life on shipboard is lacking in privacy. Too often, if he wishes to express his religion by outward and visible signs, he becomes at once a target for ridicule. The result is that men of deeply religious natures grow inward and become afraid of expressing themselves. A service like that held on Sailors' Day is for many of these men a blessed thing.

The Processional was vivid with the banners and standards of the organizations sponsoring

and participating in the services.

The hymns were the familiar old favorites with melodies that men and boys love to sing, and sing they did from the youngest "gob" to the oldest "Old Snug" from Snug Harbor.

Dr. Caleb R. Stetson, Rector of Trinity Church, gave a talk delightfully reminiscent of the old days when deep-sea going was in its infancy. He pointed out the fact that the navigators and pirates who made the first long voyages were not always, nor predominantly, materialistic. They were frequently inspired and religious men. Even the old pirates and buccanniers treated with respect the chaplains they encountered.

Just before the ending of the service a young lad from the Navy blew the roll call and after a minute of silence, he sounded taps for those who had died at sea during the past year. One wondered what those silent men might be thinking. On them rest the responsibilities of our commerce and our comforts when traveling at sea. The most that we do for them is little enough.



MRS. H. SCHUYLER CAMMANN

Mrs. H. Schuyler Cammann has recently been appointed Chairman of the Central Council of the Seamen's Church Institute Associations by the Board of Managers of the Institute. In accepting this honor and assuming this responsibility Mrs. Cammann is not entering a new field—not discovering for herself "the joys of paths untrod." As a churchwoman, she has known of the Seamen's Church Institute and its work for seamen for a number of years. Her contribution has been of a very concrete nature, having served both as Director of the South Shore Association and as Vice-Chairman of the Central Council. In becoming its Chairman she is undertaking to do even more than she has done heretofore for the cause of the Institute to which she has become completely won. Surely she has

the courage of her convictions and the belief that she will be given strength sufficient to the tasks she has undertaken.

One cannot serve on the Board of Managers of the Colonial Dames and the City History Club, on the Board of Directors of the Churchwomen's League for Patriotic Service, on Cathedral Committees, and act as President of the Women's Auxiliary of her local church (to say nothing of her home and family) without feeling that one has assumed obligations enough. But perhaps Mrs. Cammann has that feeling shared by some that there is always time for one more *good* thing, for no one ever said sufficient unto the day is the good thereof. Her interest in the Institute and the work of its Superintendent and Board of Managers is so deep and so sincere that she has cheerfully answered their summons with a gracious "thank you" and the promise, "I will do my best."

Mrs. Cammann must, of course, depend upon the cooperation of all the Associations if she is to function successfully and accomplish purposeful work for the Institute. She is sup-

ported by the thought so aptly used by Dr. Mansfield in his address to the women of the Central Council at their opening fall meeting. It was the idea of Colonel Lindbergh's "We"—the idea of interdependence, dwelling on the thought "We need the seamen, the seamen need us." So the Chairman and the Associations as "We" can accomplish much. With Mrs. Cammann at the helm we are sure that each group will be glad to "stand watch" or "give a heave on the windlass" at her command.

#### AMEN, SAY WE

The name of Mrs. Roper is a sort of Open Sesame in every Seamen's Institute. Mrs. Janet Roper is the housemother in the great Seamen's Church Institute of New York and has done more for merchant seamen by directly influencing their lives than any person living according to our knowledge. We have the feeling that many a sailor man will mention that name at the Pearly Gates and we also have the feeling that if he does he will be admitted.—*The Mainstay*.

*The Institute Means Home Home Means Christmas*

Even a lone sailorman can usually look back to some Christmas somewhere when someone was kind to him.

That makes it all the worse, for it means that he knows what Christmas this year could mean to him.

The memory persists, we find in our talks with our sailormen, in spite of the fact that most of them try to forget. Their experience has shown them that it is so futile to plan for a Christmas ashore, for almost invariably it works out some other way.

There are pathetic tales of being at sea on Christmas Day and of searching the ship for something—anything—red and green to hang above the table.

Sometimes it is too stormy to give a thought to anything but safe navigating; but anyhow they usually try not to recognize the day at all for too often it only means rubbing salt in the wound.

It is quite different at the In-

stitute. This is home to most of our seamen—the only home many of them know. Christmas here this year is likely to be the only one some of them will ever have during their sea-going days.

We want to give a bit of Christmas not only to every sailorman under our own roof Christmas Eve, but also to every unfortunate sailor we know



JACK INVESTIGATING COMFORT BAG

about in the Port of New York. This will include seamen in hospitals, on the Shipping Board "laid up" fleet at Jones Point, in prison, in insane asylums, sanitoriums, and even in a leper colony down south.

These men outside the Institute we usually manage to supply with comfort kits—small ditty bags containing a few toilet ne-

cessities and a little gift of some sort.

Last year one of our Chaplains going about in a hospital came upon a sailorman propped up in bed going over the contents of his comfort kit. When he looked up, his eyes were suspiciously blurry. He seemed to feel that an explanation was due.

"I was just thinking," he said. "I was thinking about once when I was a kid. I guess it was this candy that sort of got me, Chaplain. It might have been all right only I got my fingers all sticky and I felt like a little boy."

It was the Chaplain's turn to see blurry.

That was just one of the boys we were able to reach last year.

We have an especial opportunity through the generosity of friends of the sailorman, to give him a real Christmas if he happens to be staying at the Institute.

Each seaman who sleeps under our roof Christmas Eve is given a turkey dinner with all he

::: *Remember the Lonely Sailors through our Holiday Fund* :::

can eat, and with it some appropriate little gift—perhaps an apple or a bit of candy, enough to get his fingers sticky.

They are all pathetically grateful. They all seem like youngsters at Christmas. It would hardly surprise us to find that they all believe in Santa Claus!

But fortunately they believe in something more substantial—the Seamen's Church Institute.

They know that 25 South Street means home, and home means some sort of Christmas.

They are really placing their faith in you who build up our Holiday Fund. Each dollar made payable to the Seamen's Church Institute and mailed to 25 South Street marked "Holiday" will give at least one sailor-man reason to remember this Christmas gratefully as long as he sails the Seven Seas.

### *Mickey, Rex*

Rumania is not the only realm with a King Mickey. The Institute is now ruled by another King Mickey, erstwhile hanger-on at a South Street restaurant.

From this fate he was rescued by Paddy, our Elevator Man, who felt that Mickey was not being properly appreciated in his restaurant. He was just a scrawny little waif at the time—awed and wistful—but at the Institute he soon blossomed out into the handsome cat he is today.

Liver and milk had a great deal to do with it, but the miracle was due rather to kind sailor hands that stroked Mickey

and offered welcome relief from the hostile feet that had kicked him out of the way in his restaurant kittenhood.

As soon as Mickey began to get his bearings, he proceeded to whip all the other hundred and one cats (speaking in round numbers) who frequented the Institute. He has shown no signs of belligerency since then. Apparently it was just "a war to end wars," for having established his supremacy, Mickey settled down to a life of Riley with headquarters on the safe at our Hotel Desk.

Mickey's day-time activities are confined to eating and to

making an occasional tour of inspection of the Hotel Office to make sure all's well. Before setting forth upon his stroll, he dips at least one paw in the ink, as witness dainty footprints on blotters, window-sills, room records, etc.

When the booking of rooms is at its height, Mickey stations himself beside the cash drawer and extends a prehensile paw avariciously every time a bill is presented in payment. The sailors love the performance. In

fact they encourage his dreadful manners by tweaking the bills to amuse him. It has been suggested that Mickey, with his fascination for money, may be the solution of our building fund problem!

Occasionally he quits the Hotel office for the Soda Fountain just across the lobby. There he sits and turns his wide yellow eyes upon some susceptible sailor knowing that he will fall heir to the filling in Jack's sandwich. Those with a taste for salmon



MICKEY AND HIS BENEFACTOR



are especially popular with Mickey. Panhandling, of course, is strictly against the Institute rules, but as we said before, Mickey is king and the king can do no wrong.

It can at least be said in his favor that he asks for nothing. He is reputed to be the son of deaf and dumb parents; and Mickey, although keen of hearing, has never been known to utter a sound. There's a king for you!

Having taken on a full cargo at the Soda Fountain, Mickey hunts about the lobby for a sailorman with a spacious lap who looks as if he might stay put for a while. Then he settles down for a comfortable snooze in which his sailor host frequently joins him.

Mickey is not entirely an idler. He has assumed one duty in which he never lags. Periodically he invites into the Hotel Office as his guest a roving tiger somewhat his senior. He asks him to recline on the old shirt presented to him by an admiring sailor, and then proceeds to wash his guest thoroughly.

If wide awake and in a sociable

mood, Mickey will extend his paw cordially upon request. His sailor friends have also taught him to jump.

Consternation reigned one morning at three when it was discovered that Mickey was missing. Perhaps he had been shanghai-ed! The Night Superintendent knew that Mickey must be located before Paddy the Elevator Man arrived on the scene. So a searching party was organized with the Night Superintendent in the lead and several seamen and police officers following. They went through the building flashing their electric torches and calling for Mickey. Finally the scallawag was located in a remote corner of the new building quite unapologetic for the disturbance he had caused.

In the matter of our Institute cats, there has been an interregnum since the days of good Queen Hannah who departed for the country with her kittens last spring; but much to the delight of our sailors, King Mickey is now enthroned and his reign bids fair to be a golden age.

## *The Institute Forum*

The Institute has a forum. In our present cramped make-shift quarters it is almost all the recreation we can provide. Fortunately sailors are resourceful and adaptable and they can manage to have a good time perched on game tables or sitting two on a chair. It is recreation for the casual visitor also.

Each Tuesday evening Professor Rees of Columbia University starts the machinery in motion by giving a lecture on some subject of current interest. It may be on "Dante versus Dostoevsky," or the "Biological Basis of Democracy," or it may be about "What the Women Are Making of America."

Whatever the subject it never fails to interest, for Jack Tar of the Merchant Marine is the prize cosmopolite of the world.

We recently dropped in on a session. "Palestine and the Jew" was the subject of the evening.

Professor Rees explained, for the benefit of those attending for the first time, that the purpose of the forum is that men with different ideas on the same subject may come to understand one another better.

He then sketched briefly the history of the wanderings of the Jews and their various attempts to return to Palestine, completing his talk with an outline of the present situation there.

All this furnished the ground for discussion and the meeting was turned over to the sailormen. The proposal that they nominate their own chairman was greeted with an embarrassed silence. Finally an extremely well dressed youth on the side lines seemed to indicate his willingness to act, and after some nudging by his neighbors he rose and accepted the nomination. There was no competition so he took the chair. He was unmistakably of the race under discussion and his English, although correct and fluent, was seasoned with a strong accent.

It was a typical institute crowd as to costumes, from the faultlessly groomed chairman to the slouchy fellow in dungarees. We could have made up a complete clothing catalogue with just one thing lacking—plus fours. We have seen everything else displayed by Institute sailormen, even a dress suit—or rather, a

part of one—but plus fours, not yet.

There were collegiate sweaters with Indian designs and sheepskin coats, and oilskins, and and overalls, and army uniforms with the official buttons amputated.

A serious chap in a tweed Norfolk suit listened intently to the whole discussion, assiduously smoking a pipe which he grasped by the bowl.

Another, who appeared to belong to one of the Latin races, took out a neat little leather-covered loose-leaf notebook and tiny silver pencil to note the speaker's statement that in a naturally arid country there is never any appreciable consumption of alcoholic beverages.

As usual, a few persistent checker players kept on with their games quite unaware of the forum discussion. Once an exultant winner laughed loud and long at his victim, but the forum went on.

An old deep-water sailor rose to his feet, got possession of the floor through the chairman, and proceeded to rave for his allotted five minutes about "rulingin" and prejudice with a long *i*.

Then a lank, loose-jointed youngster unfolded his entire six-foot-something length and demanded, "Why are the British so interested in Palesteen?"

"Take your hat off, son, when you address the Chair," said our Chaplain.

Jack removed the article charitably referred to as a "hat." It was a very casual flat cap that might accurately have been described as a "lid" without being slangy.

All degrees of broad mindedness were displayed. A Rumanian Jew who spoke English with difficulty asserted, "Jew only country he has got is dollar bill;" while on the other hand an Irishman reminded him "The world is every man's country and we're all foreigners in this country."

A number of startling statements were made during the course of the evening apropos of some phase of the subject under discussion.

For instance, "It costs as much to support one wife in America as five in Turkey."

"When a Jew goes back to Palestine nowadays he finds beer instead of milk and honey."

"Ever since Moses the Jewish people had a metaphysics."

But these snatches of anecdote do not do the sailorman justice. The greater part of the discussion was contributed by intelligent well-informed men who showed a surprising knowledge of world history and race problems. And only once did the chairman have to call for order

when an enthusiastic speech was greeted with cries of "Attaboy!"

Jack Tar of the Merchant Marine is eager to learn. He likes good books and magazines and he likes the Institute forum Tuesday evenings when he may enjoy the use, but not the abuse, of course, of free speech.

### *Vignettes of the Seaman*

Sandy Wilkins stood in front of the L-to-W window at the post office mopping his brow. He sighed and mopped as he watched the window hopefully.

"Just got in from India," he volunteered. "Was in such a hurry to get my mail that I left the ship to run down here. She docked up the street a bit. Knew she was going to Hoboken but I thought I had time to make it."

"Here I stood looking out of the window waiting for my mail when I saw her back out. Into the river she went and off to Hoboken. And me here with four cents."

The mail window opened and Sandy reached for his letters.

"I've been gone four months. See this sweater?" Green, pur-

ple, red and brown stripes enhanced Sandy's generous contours. "Bought it in Calcutta. Guess it was made in America, though."

"See this one?" Sandy rolled up the striped sweater and revealed a brilliant scarlet one beneath. "Bought this in Bordeaux."

"Better be going now, I guess. Want to see if I can't sell this sweater for a dollar. Must go and get my pay in Hoboken."

Sandy started off. He came back.

"Maybe you'd like to have this? It needs pressing but it's real silk. Don't have nobody else to give it to."

Sandy was off leaving an astonished "Instituter" with a

yellow silk scarf wrapped up in torn paper stamped with a Port Said address.

Even Mr. H. G. Wells seconds the motion that seamen make perfect lovers. He gives his reason at some length in one of his recent novels.

But even perfection is forgettable after twelve months and girls still have their immemorial right to change their minds.

And thereby hangs a tale that was told by one Hank Crowley at the Institute.

Hank's pal "Spick" (short for Spick-and-Span), bade the usual sad farewell to his girl and sailed away, it seems, over all the seven seas.

Nearly a year had gone by before Hank and Spick were back at the starting point.

And were they welcomed by Spick's girl? They were not. Hank glowered. (It seems he is a woman hater.) but if Spick wanted to be a fool, he could be a fool in his own particular way. Hank didn't care. But he wouldn't stand by and see him "ditched" by a girl who didn't know a real man when she saw one.

Giving Spick the go-by for a window-dresser! Hank took matters into his own hands. He brought forth Spick's niftiest clothes—and don't let any one tell you that Spick wasn't worth looking at in his shore clothes. There was that "certain something" about Spick that proved that Mr. Wells knows his lovers.

And when Spick was all ready, Hank sent him forth with the cheering information that a window-dresser was "only a worm." And so indeed he was—one of the kind that turns aside for the likes of Spick.

Spick's methods of removal, painless or otherwise, were not divulged by Hank, but after hearing the tale and seeing the proud look on Hank's face when he thought of his protégé, there was not a shadow of a doubt in one's mind that Spick was among those present at the final close-up.

Bobby McClintock made a wry face as he stared into nothingness for a minute or two and thought.

"D'ye know, it's a queer thing the way we'd all be bidin' away the time in the fo'c'stle passin'

THE LOOKOUT aims primarily to make its readers acquainted with Jack Tar of the Merchant Marine—to show them the sort of fellow the Seamen's Church Institute exists for and to describe the various phases of the Institute's work.

Anyone who loves the sea is likely to find THE LOOKOUT of interest.

The annual subscription price is one dollar and it is sent to all who contribute five dollars or more to the work of the Institute.

Would you like to have it sent to some friend?

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