

The LOOKOUT

MARCH 1931



Chapel of Our Saviour

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE of NEW YORK

The LOOKOUT

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by

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EDMUND L. BAYLIES

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C. G. MICHALIS

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Secretary-Treasurer

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ARCHIBALD R. MANSFIELD, D.D.

Superintendent

or

MARJORIE DENT CANDEE

Editor, The Lookout

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Legacies to the Institute

You are asked to remember in your will this important work for Seamen to whom every Landsman owes such a deep debt of gratitude. **Please notice the exact title and address of the Society.**

The Institute has been greatly aided by this form of generosity. No precise words are necessary to a valid legacy to the corporation. The following clause, however, may be suggested:

FORM OF BEQUEST

I give and bequeath to "SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK," a corporation incorporated under the LAWS of the STATE OF NEW YORK, the sum of Dollars to be used by it for its corporate purposes.

If land or any specific personal property such as bonds, stocks, etc., is given, a brief description of the property should be inserted instead of the words "the sum of.....Dollars."

It is important that a will or a codicil to a will be drawn correctly. Therefore consult your lawyer.

The Lookout

VOL. XXII

MARCH, 1931

No. 3

A Chaplain Considers the Chapel

By MARK BRUSSTAR

RAY SINCLAIR in her "Rector of Wyck" writes of the hero, "John would have adored humanity in itself if he had not adored Christ; as it was he adored humanity in Christ."

That, I like to think, is the thought in the minds of those of us most interested in this work for seamen. We have the machinery to do a fine piece of social work—the Church is doing none better anywhere. We have a beautiful Chapel in which to offer up our thanks and petitions to God. What is the relationship between the two? What should be the relationship? These are serious questions. They are not easy to answer.

Life at 25 South Street is stripped free of the veneer of artificiality. That is one of its joys. In the light of our experience we observe that most of our guests are interested only in the kind of bread they can put in their mouths. The Bread of Heaven means nothing to them, and unlike their brethren at

home they feel no social pressure to pretend that it does. There is no impulse on their parts to cross the threshold of the chapel beyond that of idle curiosity. They are deaf to our invitations to come in and worship with us. Many are called—few respond. Why? Because a personal God plays no part in their scheme of living, and also because western civilization has largely lost the art of worshipping.

We all tend to do the easy thing and it is easier for the kindly disposed to love mankind, in theory at least, than it is to love God. That is why we are so strong in social service. Social service is based on love of man—usually in the mass. Sometimes it appears as though love of the individual had been dry-cleaned out of social service. Social service without religion is a ship without driving power. It soon loses its fresh enthusiasm for humanity, and becomes a cold, indifferent matter of routine.

Consequently it seems to this

Chaplain that the religious side of our work is the most important of all. It alone is able to tone up the whole; it is the best measure of the morale of the staff, and it is the outstanding witness of our consecration to this great venture.

Instead of being an appendage, an expensive after-thought, our beautiful Chapel is, (or should be) a power house generating love with all its attributes because here we learn of the love of God as it is revealed in Jesus Christ. We cannot truly serve our seamen guests and the staff unless we adore humanity—in our chapel we should learn to adore humanity in Christ. In fact some of us could not adore humanity at all had not Christ taken on our flesh and thus endowed it with divine value. Because Jesus Christ lived we know that humanity is sacred no matter how far down the scale the particular individual may appear to be.

And it is Christ the man-God who is preached in our Chapel. To the best of our ability He is held up for all to see. To behold Him is to love Him. If we can only manage to fall in love with Him all our problems of behavior will be solved.

The job of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York is

to raise the plane of human behavior. This is too much to ask of men. Christ the man-God alone can do that, and then only when the light of His love shines in our hearts.

A CHALLENGE
TO ALL GOOD FRIENDS
OF JACK TAR.

PLEASE
TURN TO
PAGES 8 AND 9.



Humanizing Our Lobby



FOR a long time we have recognized the need of some central point of contact for the thousands of merchant seamen who enter the Baylies Lobby of the Institute each day. This need has now been met by the opening, on January 19th, of an Information Desk directly opposite the main entrance doors. The Desk is proving to be a source of great interest and much comment among our sailor guests. That it is appreciated is evident, for very often men who have received information or advice call back to report and to thank the two Information Clerks who have assisted them in their problems. As an indication of the service rendered by the Desk,

during the first twelve days since its opening, there were 1569 individual contacts made.

In general, four types of contacts with the seamen are being made: *First*, there are the inquiries of a general nature regarding the Institute, directions about the building, where to find certain departments, employes, etc. *Second*, there are the outside inquiries, including requests for information regarding ships, shipping companies, employment offices, docks; also inquiries about offices; bus, train, ferry and boat information; seamen referred from our Religious and Social Service Department to hospitals, Legal Aid and other social and charitable agencies re-

quire directions for reaching the same. *Third*, seamen who come to talk, to complain, to report good or bad news to sympathetic ears—just lonely fellows eager for someone to listen to them; and *Fourth*, seamen's wallets (heavy manila envelopes for keeping their papers and documents intact) are now being distributed free of charge to seamen through the Desk.

Other attractions will be developed to encourage the men to stop for a moment to personally contact with the Institute through the medium of a friendly clerk.

In addition to giving out information which frequently saves our seamen time and money, the Desk is endeavoring to make the Institute more personal, to humanize the lobby with a sincere welcome to the incomer, a cheering word for the lonely or discouraged, and a kindly wave to the man on his way to sea.

A few of the questions asked are: What hospitals and doctors are in British Honduras—this was asked by a seaman who had been there but could not remember definite enough information to tell the lawyer who was handling his compensation claim; what to do about immigration and naturalization; who is the

Congressman of a certain district and how to address him; how to sell valuable old coins; at what hour are the daily organ recitals held at Trinity Church; what a sailor's recently married sister's name might be, on being shown an illegible signature; Where is the Edgar Allen Poe cottage and at what time can it be visited; what of the present conditions in Malay—asked by a seaman thinking of going there to settle; what are the names of Dumas' books about d'Artagnan and where can one buy them; what is the length of the S.S. "Bremen",—asked by two seamen eager to settle a bet; who was the philosopher who lived in a barrel; what to do about money deposited in the Bank of the United States; what was the date of a seaman's arrival in New York who was shipwrecked on the "Winneconne" in 1919 and brought to the Institute, etc.

Needless to say, much "information" is proffered the Clerks on all sorts of subjects ranging through politics, poetry, plays, philosophy, finance, ailments, home and family, etc.

This pivotal point of contact and service is available as a memorial gift for \$300.00. We can think of no more unique opportunity of perpetuating a life of service of some loved one.

Central Council Matinee

"I DON'T know all my boys by their full names, as perhaps a House Mother should, and so I'm going to introduce them by the names they use on ship-board. Ladies, this is 'Slim,' and this 'Red,' and then 'Abie' (he is an Irish rose), next 'Frenchie,' then our 'Caruso'—and so on." Need we say that the speaker was Mother Roper and that she was giving the names of a chorus of seamen to the association members and friends gathered in the Institute Auditorium on January 28, 1931.

As each singer was announced, he arose, bowed, and was greeted with generous applause by the audience. Introductions over and announcement slides shown according to the best movie form, the organist, who had been playing soft music for a half hour, struck up the songs the seamen like to sing—and how they sang! They swung into each melody with gusto, whether it was the dreamy waltz tempo of "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" or the lively staccato of "Give Yourself a Pat On the Back." Led by Mr. Barlow, even the ladies joined manfully in on the choruses. One could not help singing—song was in the air.

A fitting forerunner, you might say, to the enchanting movie which followed, "Rogue Song," with Lawrence Tibbett in the title role. Such a movie

almost justifies the not altogether popular "talkies"—for a talkie it was, and wonderfully clear and smooth its reproduction with the Institute's new sound equipment. It was a movie full of color, literally, with humor in spots, with sufficient heart-interest in the story to "satisfy," and with an intelligent and happy ending, to say nothing of glorious singing throughout its entire length. Nor will we ever forget its beautiful ballet; the exquisite daintiness of those twinkling toes that called forth a spontaneous burst of applause from all of us at the conclusion of the dance.

What a sympathetic audience! Was it the movie which put all hearts in tune, or did our guests feel that warmth of hospitality which the whole Institute family wished them to? Certainly a merry spirit continued during the tea and social hour which followed the entertainment. There was a lilt to the laughter and a cordiality in the conversation as old friendships were renewed and new ones made to the tune of clinking tea-cups.

Holding to the plan of having this party a purely family affair, our restaurant waitresses, aided by a volunteer corps of members of the staff, dispensed tea efficiently and graciously. If in their zeal to serve all guests promptly a few sandwiches or cakes, not to mention tea, were "shipped," what does it matter?



Mother Roper Waves Au Revoir to Some of Her Sailorboys.

It wouldn't be a real tea-party unless something went overboard. Did not our Boston patriots teach us that long ago?

To make more vivid the brightness of the whole there have to be some shadows. Neither Mrs. H. S. Cammann, Chairman of the Central Council, nor Dr. Mansfield were there to enjoy it all with us. Mrs. Roper had given us our Superintendent's greetings and had explained his absence in her opening talk. Speaking of him she said, "Some people call Dr. Mansfield a quiet man. To my mind that does not describe him. I think of him more as a fighter"—and she went on to explain

that he was now fighting for the recovery of his eye sight and therefore unable to be with us.

Mrs. Roper could not give us Mrs. Cammann's greetings, which arrived just after her talk in the form of a telegram from the south. We know that both Mrs. Cammann and Dr. Mansfield were regretting that relentless law which rules that a body cannot occupy two places at one time. Luckily no such limits are placed on spirit—and theirs was with us.

To them and to all others whom unkind Fate kept away from this our first Matinee, we would say consolingly that there will be more parties. Like the courageous Oliver of Dickens' fame many have already made request for more, and if more parties are wanted, more there will be. The spirit of service is so strong at 25 South Street that we are sure the Central Council has imbibed some of it and will plan with greater confidence and more pleasure their next informal gathering of associations and friends.

Since every soul who foregathered at our first attempt shared in making it a success, let us "give ourselves a pat on the back" and make a firm resolve that when the next party is announced, we will "Let the Rest of the World Go By" and set sail to join the family at 25 South Street.

A Quarter Mile Dive Beneath the Sea

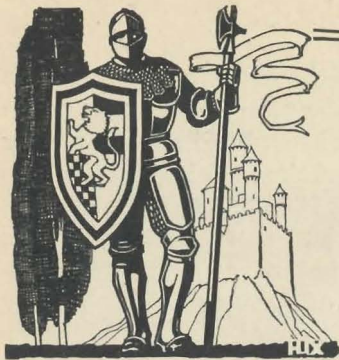
DURING the year we are privileged to listen to lectures as diversified as "The Making of a Newspaper", "The Scientific Work of Worms" and the "Circulation of Blood." The lectures are always well attended for it is necessary to bear in mind that in a group as large as that of our resident seamen there are many thoughtful men hungry for decent entertainment.

The lecture on February second by Dr. William Beebe of the American Museum of Natural History set the high water mark for a long time to come. Nearly eight hundred seamen and guests filled our auditorium to hear this man speak on "A Quarter Mile Dive Beneath the Sea."

Dr. Beebe spoke to us in an informal, chatty way, which of course made a great appeal to his audience. He also showed moving pictures of his efforts to collect fish in nets from great depths. Most thrilling of all he had movies of his descent in a diving bell to 1600 feet beneath the surface of the sea. No man had ever before approached that depth and lived to tell others about it. Our lecturer with becoming modesty and fine sense of humor shared with us his great feat.

Not the least interesting part were the pictures of the strange fish he brought to the surface for the first time in history. It seems that at 1600 feet there is no light at all and there never has been the slightest ray of light for millions of years. Consequently fish with eyes must supply their own light as they move about and this they do by means of little lanterns of tremendous brilliancy. These lanterns are so powerful that several of them on a live fish could illuminate a room as large as our auditorium. Not all fish at that depth have eyes. These fish have long feelers that enable them to grope their way through the water as a blind man taps the pavement with his cane. The colors of the spectrum are unknown at this depth. All fish are black and white and never have been, nor can they be any other color.

On the way out of the hall one of the seamen smiled at the lecturer and said: "That was a good talk Mr. Beebe, we like that." We are sure that he spoke for us all. When Dr. Beebe returns from his next expedition to the same locality where he hopes to dive a half mile beneath the sea, we trust that we are privileged to hear his story.



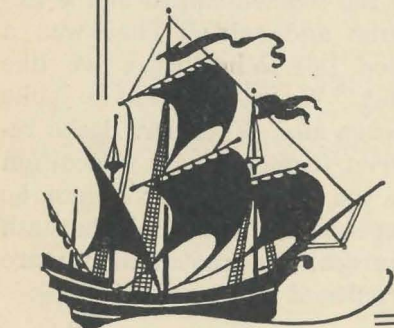
A CHALLENGE FOR TODAY!

In the olden days of chivalry a challenge which should stir was customary for a knight to challenge his enemy by tossing a fair lady's glove onto the tournament field. Today there are other ways of tossing challenges—as thrilling as well as as romantic as those of feudal times. For example, the Institute is facing a strong adversary — the BUILDING DEBT — and it is a challenge to our friends of the seamen to help vanquish our common foe.

From one of our loyal and generous friends, a gentleman ninety-two years of age, comes the following message:

Will You Be One of Nine to Accept This Challenge?

Please make your check payable to Junius S. Morgan, Jr.
Treasurer, ANNUAL BUILDING FUND
25 South Street, New York City



Man's Conquest of the Atlantic

PART I

ABOUT a year and a half ago a great commotion was going on in shipping circles and among seafaring men because the *S.S. Bremen*, pride of the North German Lloyd, had broken the record held since 1910 by the Cunard steamship *Mauretania* for the fastest passage across the Atlantic. Then, a year ago this month, March 25, 1930, to be exact, the *Bremen's* record time of 17 hours and 42 minutes was beaten by her sister ship, the *Europa*, by a matter of 36 minutes.

In the Institute's lobby, crowded every hour of the day and evening with thousands of merchant seamen, a group of young sailors were recently discussing the merits of these fast ocean vessels. In their midst, quietly listening to their boastings, was an old weather-beaten salt. After a while, when there was a pause in the conversation, this tar ventured to speak between puffings on his pipe:

"Strange as it may seem to you youngsters," he drawled, "still it is God's truth that your early Atlantic steamers didn't stand a show when it came to racing against the fast clipper ships. Why, the steamship *Sa-*

vannah which you're all so proud of, which made the trip to Liverpool in 1819 took 26 days, was nothin' but an old tortoise compared with the clipper *Dreadnought*. There was a fast sailin' vessel for you! She made the passage from New York to Liverpool under 14 days, and from New York to Queenstown in 9 days, 17 hours!"

The group looked questioning and surprised. It had never occurred to them that there had once been rivalry between clipper ships and steamships in the race for supremacy of the Atlantic. The old man continued to press his point home: "Yes, my lads, and before the *Dreadnought* there was the *Sovereign of the Seas*, and before her was the *Red Jacket*, the *Harvest Queen* and the *Independence*—names that don't mean a thing to you young fellers ridin' on floatin' palaces—Them were great Lines in those days—the Black Ball, the Swallow Tail, Black Star, Red Star, Black X, Red Cross and Dramatic lines. We men that manned those ships didn't call ourselves sailors—we were 'packet rats' and as tough and courageous a bunch as you'd ever see. Mutinies! We lived

on 'em for that was the only way we could get what we got—by fightin' for it."

The group had edged nearer the speaker, for they recognized that here was a deep-water sailing man who "knew his stuff" and whose memory, in spite of his eighty-odd years, was clear and keen.

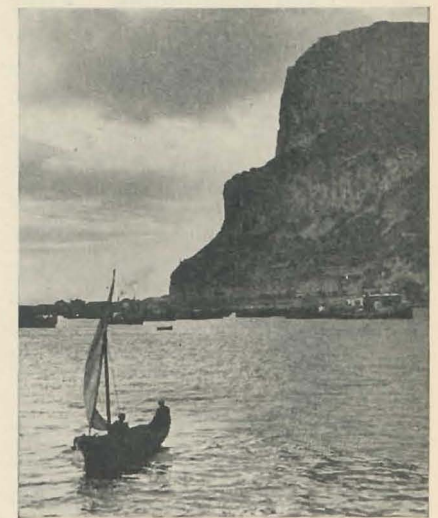
"Sure thing," went on the old fellow, "the Black Ball, besides bein' the first American packet line out of New York, was the best known anywhere. It began with sailings on the first of each month and later on the sixteenth, too. The *Pacific*, *New York*, *Canada*, all Black Ballers, could make the trip from New York to Liverpool in 23 days. I knew an old sailor who sailed on the *Galatea* from St. John's, Newfoundland, to Portsmouth, in eleven days without havin' to make a single tack.

"Many a time a clipper like the *Tornado* of the old Morgan Line would beat a Cunard steamship from Liverpool to Boston."

The old man went on to tell of the advent of steamships to replace the regular packets for mail transportation. "But they all had to carry sails as auxiliaries," he commented, "which showed they didn't trust the steam very much, at that."

The first attempt to propel

vessels by steam is claimed by the Spanish to have been made at Barcelona, by a paddle-wheel vessel, under the direction of Blasco de Garey, in 1543. Papin, in France, about 1707; Jonathan Hulls, in England, in 1736; William Henry, in Pennsylvania, U. S. A. are also mentioned in connection with it; but the first steamer worthy of being so called was that of John Fitch, at Philadelphia, which he placed for hire upon the Delaware River in 1787. This primitive craft was propelled by a system of paddles or oars working vertically, and was the forerunner of the mammoth ocean grayhounds which speed across the Atlantic today. Some remarkable statements of John Fitch, showing how far-seeing he was,



Rock of Gibraltar.

deserve mention. On writing to a friend for the loan of fifty dollars to finish this boat, he stated:

"This, sir, whether I bring it to perfection or not, will be the mode of crossing the Atlantic, in time, for packets and armed vessels." On another occasion, when praising his hobby to two visitors, Fitch made use of the following words:

"Well, gentlemen, although I shall not live to see the time, you will, when steamboats will be preferred to all other means of conveyance, especially for passengers." After which, one visitor said to the other, "Poor fellow! What a pity he is crazy!"

About the same time that Fitch was experimenting with his boat attempts were also being made in Scotland by Miller, Taylor and Symington. After Fitch came, in 1807, Robert Fulton, who first came into notice through his steamer, the *Clermont* on the Hudson. This steamer was followed, in 1812, by Bell's *Comet*, the first on the Clyde, from which date it may be said that steam navigation became fairly launched, as from that time forth steamships began to be built of all kinds and descriptions.

The first actual attempt at Atlantic steam navigation was made by Colonel John Stevens,

of New York, in 1819. This far-seeing gentleman despatched what would be called an auxiliary steamship named the *Savannah*, which was built by Crocker and Fickett, at Corlears Hook, New York City, as an ordinary sailing vessel, but was soon afterwards fitted with engines and boilers, and steamed from the city of Savannah on the 25th of May, 1819, arriving in Liverpool, after a passage of 26 days, on the 20th of June. Steam-power was used six days, the paddle-wheels being so designed that they could be unshipped, so as not to interfere with the sailing qualities. This operation required about half an hour's time to effect. Her bunker capacity was limited, as she could only carry eighty tons of coal, besides a quantity of wood fuel. Notwithstanding her successful trip across the Atlantic, her machinery was afterwards taken out, and she continued to trade for some years as a sailing vessel, until, like so many other famous vessels, came to an end by being wrecked on Long Island in 1822. Her engines consisted of an inclined direct-acting cylinder, of 40 inches diameter and 5 foot stroke, and the boiler pressure used was 10 pounds per square inch. Her speed under steam alone averaged six knots.

(To be continued)

Two Interesting Personalities

NOT many people can recall as dramatic yesterdays as can Seaman Bren Lacka, a Persian seaman now stopping with us at the Institute. During his fifty-seven years which, incidentally, must have been enjoyable ones, for he appears to be about thirty-five years of age, he has witnessed many strange adventures. His father was in the Persian consular service and died at the ripe old age of 103.

Lacka speaks eight Oriental languages but his *bête noire* is English which, in all his years of traveling, he has not been able to master to any effective degree. One of the members of the Institute staff who studied Malay held a long conversation and learned from him the following: While President McKinley was governing this country's affairs at Washington Lacka served as the President's golf caddy and was with him when he was shot.

After this tragedy Lacka returned to his first love, the sea, and has continued ever since to follow his calling as an able seaman. A Mohammedan by faith, Lacka said that he was much impressed with a Christian institution such as ours which helps seamen of every age, race and creed. We were able to find

a good job for him and he has vowed never to forget his friends at 25 South Street.

Another interesting seaman who recently stayed at the Institute was a young oiler, Ernest G., from the State of Washington, who had a disastrous experience in Porto Rico six weeks ago. Ernest had just been paid off and was strolling down the main street of that Southern city when he was attacked by two natives with stiletos who robbed him of all his wages. They made a deep gash in his back and left him on the pavement apparently dead. An American sailor found him and took him to the hospital where it was found that the gash was sixteen inches long! The stiletto had severed most of his back muscles so that his kidneys and heart and stomach and lungs hung suspended. Expert surgery saved Ernest's life, however, and after six weeks in a hospital he came to the Institute looking very pale and wan. He says he can do any kind of work except heavy lifting. We are trying to find a job for him which will not overtax his strength. In the meantime Ernest is our guest and he is a very likeable, cheerful young fellow.



A Sailor Cartoonist

SEAMAN E. HENSMAN has had his share of hardships. He arrived in New York after a voyage to the Far East. His shipmate stole his ship's wages and all his clothes. He came to the Institute in a pair of borrowed dungarees. It developed that he has a natural talent for drawing. The Institute provided him with drawing paper and pens and ink with the result that several of his amusing cartoons adorn the bulletin boards of our various lobbies. He has sold some of his work to "Life" and "Judge" but he could not go to the editors until we managed to secure a suit of clothes for him to make an approach to the publishers. This is what we mean by helping seamen to help themselves.

Generosity

PETE walked into Mother Roper's office and laid a small white box tied in blue ribbon on her desk. Then he stood grinning in pleased expectancy as she untied the ribbon. The contents proved to be a lovely silver chain for her glasses. "Why, Pete," exclaimed Mother Roper, "You have been too generous. You must have spent all your wages getting this beautiful chain for me!" For a moment Pete rocked back and forth on his heels, evidently enjoying the tribute paid to his generosity. Then, he leaned over and whispered in Mother Roper's ear these reassuring words: "Don't you worry about that, Mother. I may as well admit it to you. I bought that swell chain dirt cheap in a pawn shop!"

Relief for the Aged

WE are glad to report that the new Old Age Compensation Law is bringing relief to quite a number of our old seamen. Nothing is too good for these veterans of the sea and it is with real joy that we help them file their applications for pensions and get the checks they are entitled to receive.

Our Slop Chest "Museum"

WE hope that visitors to the Institute will ask to see the embryo museum in our slop chest. The photograph on this page can scarcely do it justice. All the treasures of the globe are here represented. Jewelry, baskets, carved ivory elephants, old weapons, every kind of novel souvenir which sailormen have garnered from the four corners of the earth. Bones of animals 300 years old, mandolins, alarm clocks, and even a sign taken from a Turkish street . . . these and many more curiosities are found in sailors' confiscated baggage and placed for safekeeping in our "museum."

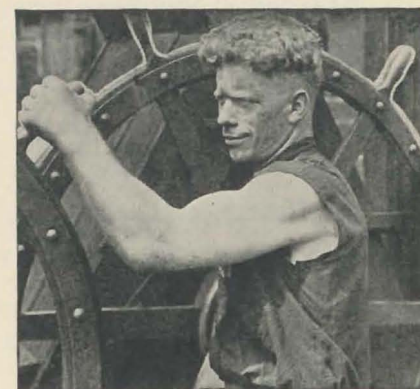


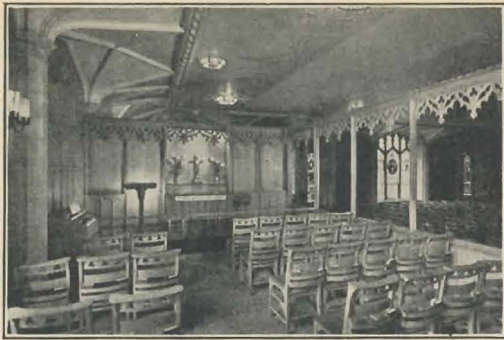
Befriended

A SOUTHERN woman wrote to Mayor Walker and asked his aid in finding her sailor son. "I am so worried", she wrote "for fear that in these hard times he may be hungry and destitute and too proud to let me know." Mayor Walker turned over the letter to Mother Roper who lost no time in making inquiries and was successful in finding the sailorboy. She sent her report to the Mayor and to the Commissioner of Public Welfare who responded with letters of commendation for finding and befriending a lonely boy.

Cautious

STANDING at the S. C. I. Station of the U. S. Post Office window one morning, we overheard a colored sailor say to the post-mistress: "Yas, lady. Please do it agin jes' like you done it the las' time." Inquiry revealed that each month this Negro asks the post-office clerk to write the name and address of his mother in Tennessee on an envelope, and also his return address on the flap so he can be absolutely certain his letter will arrive safely. This is an example of the many little ways we befriend seamen.





"Little Chapel"—Chapel of Our Saviour

through constant service which fills a real need. Will YOU subscribe to a Memorial to commemorate some life of service?

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

Seamen's Room	\$500.00
Chapel Chairs	100.00

Among the memorials still available are:

Seamen's Reading and Game Rooms.....	\$25,000.00
Cafeteria	15,000.00
Medical 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
Seamen's Rooms, each	500.00
Chapel Chairs	50.00

Enduring Memorials

If it is true that "service to the living is the best memorial" to those who have gone beyond, then surely our Annex with its numerous useful memorial objects offers an opportunity to perpetuate the memory of relatives and friends

An Enviable Record of Growth and Achievement During 1930

486,219	lodgings registered.
336,261	meals served.
996,766	sales made at the soda fountain.
81,109	pieces of baggage checked and protected.
38,297	books and magazines distributed among merchant seamen.
85,129	special needs administered to by the Social Service Department.
30,544	Relief Loan interviews transacted by the Relief Loan Department.
3,960	seamen treated in the Institute Clinic.
4,467	seamen placed in positions by the Employment Department.
401	missing men located.
\$609,115.45	received for safe keeping and transmission to seamen's families.
13,016	seamen attended 214 religious services.
38,686	seamen made use of the barber shop, tailor shop and laundry.

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