

# SAILORS' SUPERSTITIONS

## VESSELS TO WHICH JACK TAR GIVES A WIDE BERTH.

Time-Honored Ideas of the Orthodox British Seaman Concerning "Unlucky" Vessels and Captains.

A recent writer in London Tit-Bits says Jack Tar is notoriously as brave as a lion. Strangely enough, he is at the same time perhaps the most superstitious creature under the sun. In my employment as a shipping agent's clerk in a large port I have come across some peculiar instances of this. In almost every port in Britain you will find one or two vessels to which sailors, acquainted with their history, give a wide berth. These are not necessarily craft with a bad reputation as to seaworthiness. They may be as fine as any afloat—but Jack looks askance at them as "unlucky."

In the month of June, four years ago, a vessel was launched from a ship-building yard on the Tyne, built to the order of a Liverpool shipping firm. A finer craft for her tonnage never cut the water, and she was named after the senior partner's second daughter. She was lost on her first voyage to the West Indies, her captain, second mate and eight of the crew losing their lives. She was quickly replaced by an exactly similar vessel, receiving the same name as the former one. What became of this ship is a mystery. She never arrived at her destination on her fourth voyage out, and was eventually given up as lost with all hands. When a third vessel bearing the same name was launched, Jack regarded her with an evil eye, and

REFUSED TO SAIL IN HER. She had to be re-christened before her owners could get a crew.

One of the finest cargo vessels sailing between London and the West Coast of Africa had, five years back, attained quite a phenomenal record as a "death ship" from the number of men lost by disease and accident on each voyage. At length so serious an obstacle did her history present in getting men to join her that her name was altered. Under her new one, too, she is rapidly becoming known as a ship to be avoided. That the strange mishaps which befall her hapless crew are not the fault of those in command is proved from the fact that she has had no fewer than four chief officers in nine years. She will, in all probability, have soon to be re-named again.

A vessel which has played a part in some great sea disaster is at once shunned by Jack as far as he has a choice. If she has figured in a collision resulting in wreck and loss of life, he is apt to regard her as unlucky. If the mishap has been caused by the fault of those aboard her, and a whisper spreads that all that could have been done was not done for saving those on the ship she ran down, the sailor views her as a guilty thing sailing the seas with a track of blood behind her, and doomed to disaster. So general is this feeling, that upon such an occurrence the offending ships are most often re-named at once, the owners seeking thus to disconnect her with the event.

There is a ship at the present time attached to the port of London which, while sailing under her former name, one wild night,

RAN DOWN A VESSEL in the Channel, causing her to sink with all those aboard her. Such an evil reputation attaches to her that, on her identity becoming known among some of the men engaged to serve on her, nine of them recently deserted in a body, preferring the almost inevitable penalty of fine or imprisonment to sailing in her.

As there are unlucky ships, so there are also unfortunate captains. These, however, are more scarce, for a very good reason. You cannot get rid of an unlucky vessel very well, representing as it does some thousands of pounds, but the unfortunate captain is most frequently put on the shelf as soon as he gets that reputation with his owners. If they don't do so, however, Jack shirks him. One of those unfortunate individuals—as able, courageous, and kind a fellow as ever trod deck—acquired this fatal reputation by promptly losing the two very first vessels he was placed in command of. He doubtless would have been shelved by his employers, one of the biggest grain carrying firms, had he not been a relative of one of the senior partners. When he received a third appointment out, however, Jack shrank from risking "getting the salt water in his mouth" by sailing under so unlucky an individual. Such difficulty was there in obtaining a crew, that he had to resign and seek a command under another firm.

It is by no means uncommon for there to reside in some dirty and foul-smelling dwelling in the neighborhood of the docks in a large port an old and withered beldame who lays claim to and is reckoned by the sailors to possess some queer power of foreseeing whether a ship's voyage will be prosperous or the reverse.

AN OLD LADY OF THIS SORT, who dwelt in one of the chief ports on the west coast, and who died two years ago—her death being caused by her trying, while intoxicated, to replenish a lighted paraffin lamp with whiskey, which she mistook for oil—was found on her decease to be worth no less than 723 sovereigns, kept in a box under her bed. These did not wholly represent the money given to her by "poor Jack" when consulting her as to how his voyage would turn out. Many a captain had helped to swell that "pile," for so great was "Tar Meg's" influence over bands with her good or bad predictions, that captains found it better to avoid trouble by propitiating her with a present to secure a favorable "fore-sight" for their voyage. In one case which came under my own observation, Meg, being offended with a certain captain, set abroad such effective curses and dismal predictions regarding the fate of the vessel and all its occupants, that he at length, as the shortest way to pacify his hands, despatched £5 to the old lady, who promptly appeared on the quay to "take of the curses" and to bless and

pronounce a decree of prosperity over the ship.

Such cases are, of course, rare, but now and again Jack recognizes among those about to sail on board his ship one with whom he won't tempt Davy Jones. An instance of this kind occurred some years ago, when among the passengers aboard a vessel bound to the United States was discovered to be a man who, although he had been acquitted at his trial, was generally regarded as having been guilty of the murder of a young woman under peculiarly atrocious circumstances. The sailors revolted, and successfully too, against his being allowed to stay aboard, a proceeding which was dictated not only by Jack's honest indignation and abhorrence of the fearful crime of which the man was suspected, but also because, as one sailor remarked, such a passenger was enough to sink any vessel, even "farther than the lowermost bottom of the unfathomable sea."

## NEW TELEGRAPHIC INVENTION.

Marvelous Results Claimed to Have Been Accomplished—350 Words Sent and Printed in a Minute.

The Western Union officials in New York are very much elated over what they say is the success of a new invention in telegraphy. The experiments have been conducted in the private offices of the Western Union building in New York City, upon the long circuit between New York and Chicago. The result of these experiments, as stated in the enthusiastic language of one of the leading officials of the Western Union Company, is this:—"We have secured the invention, which is the most advanced of anything that has as yet been talked about in telegraphic service. We can send from New York to Chicago in quadruplex over one wire, and have the copy at each end produced upon a printed page, and not upon a slip, 350 words a minute. I say that we can do this because we have done it. There is no delay about it. It is not a system liable to be obstructed by delicate and impossible conditions. It is not a fancy or a fad which can produce a result in an electric laboratory, but of no service in a practical operation of daily life. The invention is accomplished. It is practicable. It will work. It is a practical printing telegraph, which will give a result in page form like the page of a book. It is the thing the electrical inventors have been striving for since the early days of telegraphy. It is the Wheatstone system very greatly modified and perfected, so that a single wire can be worked both ways and yield the result indicated. It will be some time before these machines can be put into practical operation, for very few have as yet been made. They are still in the hands of the inventors and constructors, but the scheme is perfected and the fact is accomplished."

"I suppose," said the gentleman to whom this statement was made, "that the result will be a considerable reduction in telegraphic tolls, so soon as this new system can be put into practical operation?" "In that," said the official, "you possibly may be mistaken. The benefit for the present certainly will be to the advantage of the company which owns and has perfected the invention. There is no reason why telegraphing should be any cheaper. It is in many instances too cheap. There are certain classes of messages which are sent for less than the actual cost of transmission. I know of no movement to reduce telegraph tolls because of the invention I have described, or of any other that is expected."

It is understood that the Wheatstone device, which has been in use and has been owned by the Western Union Company for some years has been greatly improved through the inventive and legal ability of a patent attorney named Buckingham, who is largely engaged in the Western Union service.

## A ROYAL PHOTOGRAPH SHOP.

Queen Victoria Has a New Picture Taking Outfit at Windsor and Her Own "Dark Room."

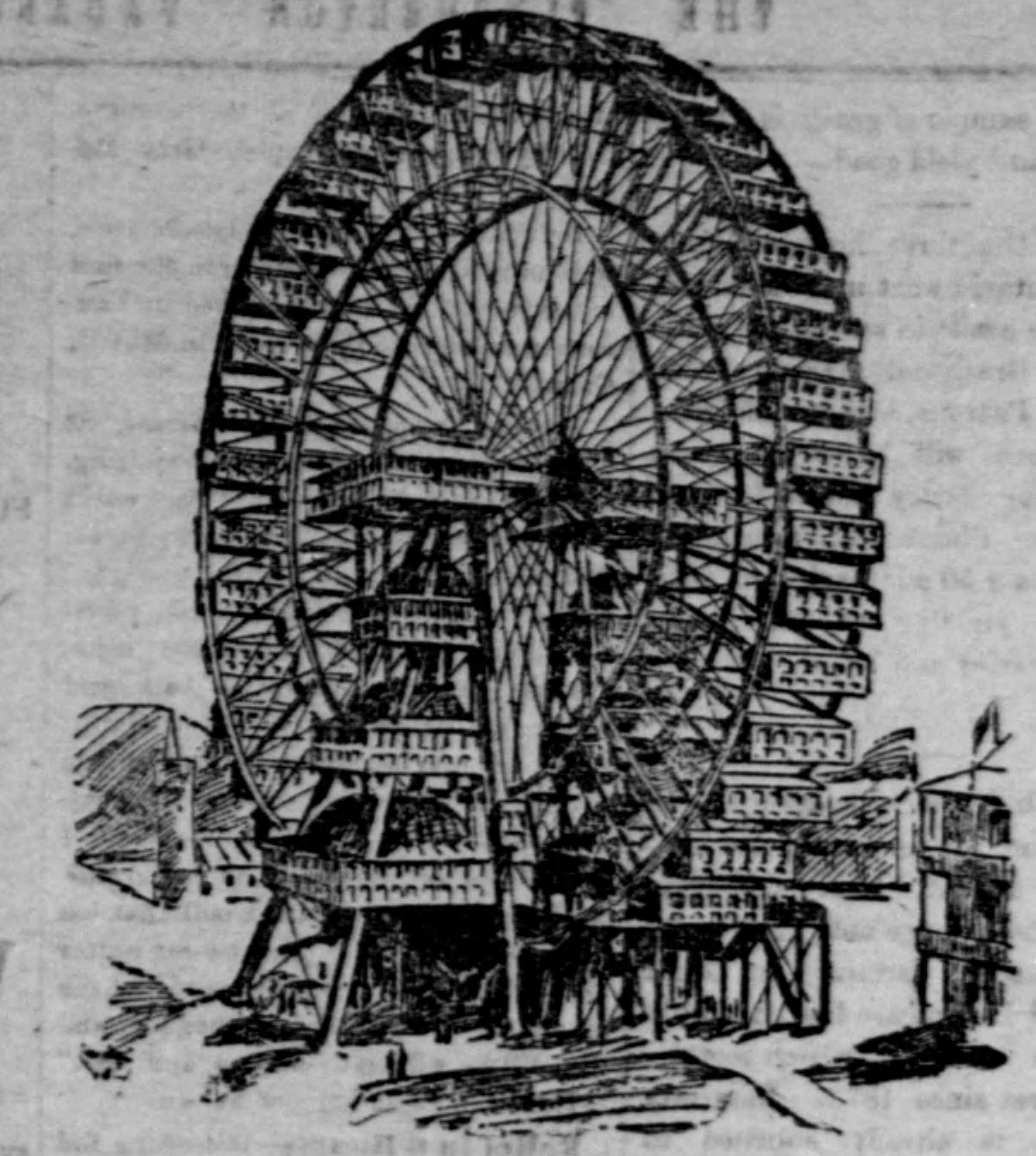
There is a brand-new project in the household of the Queen at Windsor a royal department of photography having just been established. For several years past Her Majesty has been in the habit of having events that have taken place about the castle and in the grounds photographed that she might have on hand a sort of continuous historical record. This habit has grown very strongly upon her within the past few months, and so many pictures have been taken that the Lord Chamberlain has finally ordered the purchase of a camera and a full set of photographic apparatus. Several of the servants about the castle have had private lessons from a professional photographer on the art of taking pictures and developing them, and a wonderfully complete "dark room" has been fitted up.

Two objects have been accomplished in this way. The first is that privacy is assured and there is no risk whatsoever of the publication of the pictures taken. The Queen is morbidly sensitive in regard to this matter in general, though she does not mind the printing of pictures of herself and an occasional group.

The first pictures taken by the amateurs of the court were a series of photographs of certain farm products. These were a great success, and the Queen has expressed much satisfaction in this new departure. It is planned, as soon as all the details can be arranged, to have all the reports that come to her Majesty from the various royal palaces of the kingdom accompanied with well-mounted photographs.

## Sound and Distance.

The roar of the lion can be heard farther than the sound of any other living creature. Next comes the cry of the hyena and then the hoot of an owl. After these the panther and the jackal. The donkey can be heard fifty times farther than the horse, and the cat ten times as far as the dog. Strange as it may seem, the cry of a hare can be heard farther than that of either the dog or cat.



LONDON'S RIVAL TO THE FERRIS WHEEL. LONDON'S BIG WHEEL GOING.

It is Thirty-six Feet Higher Than the Ferris Wheel and Will Carry 1,600 Passengers.

Three hundred feet from the ground rises the great wheel which English engineers have been at work upon for nearly two years, and which is now in daily operation. It is in the exhibition grounds at Earl's Court, where it forms the most striking feature of the Empire of India exhibition. This wheel is thirty-six feet higher than the Ferris Wheel at the World's Fair, after which it was modelled. It is built to carry 1,600 passengers, and it is expected to earn a lot of money. There are forty carriages suspended around the edge of

this immense steel and iron fabric. Thirty of these are ordinary cars and five others are for smokers.

The other five cars are used by first-class passengers, who object to riding with the motley crowd, and are willing to pay sixpence or a shilling for the privilege of sitting on cushioned seats. The axle of the wheel weighs fifty-three tons and is forty feet in length, requiring delicate handling to drop it into its place 150 feet above the ground.

The great towers on either side of the wheel are to be used for recreation purposes. A ballroom is on top of each tower, and there are three restaurants built one above the other, where visitors may eat and drink and watch the wheel go round. A magnificent view of London and its environs may be obtained from the top of the wheel.

## PROVISIONING A STEAMER.

### LARGE QUANTITIES CONSUMED ON AN OCEAN VOYAGE.

Tremendous Stores Taken on at Montreal and Quebec—The Cost to Run a Steamship to Liverpool and Back—Officers and Seamen's Pay.

Few if any outside those directly connected with the steamship business have any conception of the expense and the amount of supplies consumed on board one of the larger vessels plying between Montreal and Europe. The requisition is a printed document of no mean dimensions. It is printed in blank and filled out in ink, and signed by the chief steward. It is the regular requisition for supplies for the steamship Parisian on her last outward voyage. Besides the beef, there was everything one could think of. Of mutton there were 1600 pounds and of pork 600 pounds. Veal was represented by just one-quarter of a ton. There were 120 pounds of ham, 155 pounds of sausages and 16 whole lambs. This finished the list of staple meats. Next came such delicacies as sheep's heads and calves' heads. Of the former there were twenty and the latter fourteen. Then followed 20 ox tongues, 50 ox tails, 50 kidneys, 6 hearts and 4 livers, followed up with 6 sucking pigs. That sweet-breeds are a favorite dish with the travelling public was shown by the item of 400 pairs. Next in rotation was a fair sprinkling of "barn-yarders." These included 320 spring chickens, 48 ducks, 150 ducklings, 30 geese, 70 turkeys and 20 pigeons.

### SIX FRIDAYS AT SEA

Instead of only six. The bill of fare was: Spanish mackerel 48 pounds; fresh cod, 250 pounds; halibut, 100 pounds; haddock, 150 pounds; dore, 75 pounds; and salmon 250 pounds. Besides these, there were several odd lots which amounted to a little over 400 pounds more. Of such trifles as eggs there were 600 dozen. The item of butter was represented by just 950 pounds—700 dairy and 250 creamery.

In the vegetable line was enumerated 150 bushels of potatoes, 300 pounds of rhubarb, 28 dozen cauliflowers, 90 dozen lettuce and 20 dozen cabbages. Besides these was an endless variety of other vegetables, fruits, etc. To take care of such supplies fifteen tons of ice was taken along.

That all travellers do not stick religiously to Scotch and soda is shown in the item of 250 gallons of milk, which is the amount taken on board. How this is kept fresh throughout a ten days' voyage will occur to many. In answer to a query, Mr. Hannah, the passenger manager, explained that the cans were buried in ice in much the same manner as an ice-cream freezer is submerged. With plenty of ice there was no trouble in having the milk perfectly sweet for even a longer time. In dry groceries there is of course a large amount which is not given. These include sugar, tea, coffee, etc., and are taken from the company's own stores in Liverpool. The practice followed by some of the American lines out of New York of taking meat for the round trip from this side is not followed by the lines plying between Canada and Europe.

The supplies used on the trip across are purchased in both Montreal and Quebec. In Quebec a better supply of fruit was obtainable, and, of course, was one day fresher than if taken on board Montreal.

The largest single item in the Parisian, as in all other ships, is

### THE COAL BILL

Between Montreal and Liverpool on one trip the Parisian burns in the neighborhood of 1150 tons of coal. As the direct result of this coal consumption sixty engineers, firemen, stokers and coal handlers are required. To attend to the wants of the passengers in a thousand and one ways, seventy-five stewards, cooks, etc., are used. Next come the sailors proper. They number about thirty in all, including officers. This makes a total of 165 people who sailed on the Parisian on her last trip, taking care of six hundred passengers.

"What is the total cost of a round trip of the Parisian?" asked the reporter.

"This is somewhat difficult to figure," said Mr. Hannah, "but in round numbers I should say forty thousand dollars at this time of year would about cover the expenses to Liverpool and return."

The salaries of the officers and men on a trans-Atlantic steamer—though by no means excessively large—make in the aggregate no inconsiderable sum. The fact of all their living expenses being paid too makes the pay even better than is at first glance shown. The captain of an ocean liner of the better class is paid from three thousand to four thousand dollars a year, though a few get as high as five thousand or six thousand dollars. The chief engineer's salary is next in size, and is usually about twelve hundred dollars per year. His assistants' pay varies and runs from one thousand to four hundred and eighty dollars per year.

### THE CHIEF OFFICER

receives nine hundred dollars, and the three officers under him various sums down to forty dollars per month for the fourth officer. Ableseamen receive twenty dollars, and a ship's carpenter forty dollars, while the petty officers get about twenty-five dollars per month. The chief steward's salary is fifty dollars per month, and the second steward's thirty dollars. The balance get from fifteen dollars to twenty-five dollars according to their worth. It is into this department, however, that the fees are so freely given by the tourists, and a very handsome amount is made by some of the stewards within a few months. The surgeon who looks after the ill—supposed or otherwise—of those on board, receives sixty dollars per month from the company as well as an occasional fee from a well-disposed traveler.

There are some very curious laws in vogue upon the high seas. And not the least of them is the fact that it is contrary to law for a ship to go to sea without a carpenter, though that same vessel—be it a freight ship exclusively—need not carry a doctor. It is also against the law for a steamship carrying passengers to make a voyage without a physician.

### Lots of Luck.



First friend—"Had any luck?" Second friend—"Bully. Why, it ain't been an hour since I had a lovely nibble."

### Not Easy.

Hinks—There ought to be some easy way for a man to acquire a fortune. Dicks—Why not marry one. Hinks—But my dear boy, I said some easy way!

# MARKET IN A PALACE.

## Viennese Buy Leavings From the Royal Table.

In the Austrian court it is contrary to custom for perishable articles to appear twice on the Imperial table. The result is large perquisites for the attendants. To one man falls all the unworked bottles, to another the wine left in the glasses, to another the joints, and to another still the game or the sweets. Every morning a sort of market is held in the basement of the palace, where the Viennese come readily to purchase the remains. And there is no other means of procuring Imperial Tokay than this.

Long ago in England even the greatest men in the land were pleased to receive such perquisites. In the reign of Henry II., for instance, the Lord Chancellor was entitled to the candle-ends of one great and 40 small candles per day. And the aquarius, who must be a baron in rank, received one penny for drying towels on every ordinary occasion of the king's bathing. The ceremonial that the revolution swept away from the first Emperor Napoleon was careful to revive in a less extreme form, and it is characteristic of the man that he made a special study of it, and went so far as to prescribe the special forms to be observed on great occasions. Before his coronation, M. Isabey, the miniature painter, gave

## SEVEN REHEARSALS

with wooden dolls appropriately dressed of the seven ceremonies that were to be enacted. And one ceremony being especially intricate, the functionaries rehearsed it in person in the gallery of Diana at the Tuileries, a plain having been carefully traced with chalk on the floor. This was the sort of thing in which Napoleon especially rejoiced, and he himself arranged before hand all the details of the entry of Maria Louisa into France, and of his subsequent marriage to her. Among other particulars, on reaching what was then French territory, the Archduchess was conducted into the eastward room of a three-roomed house near Brunan—the French Commissioner entered the westward, while the third room in the middle was occupied by the rest of the party. And M. de Bausset, who gives an account of the proceedings, having bored holes with a gimlet in the door of the middle room had a splendid view of the unconscious Princess. But, he quaintly adds, it was the ladies who took most advantage of his foresight.

The ceremonial of the Chinese court is somewhat exacting. It used to include, if it does not now, complete prostration before the throne. Last century a Persian Envoy refused to go through the degrading ordeal. Directions were given to the officials to compel him by stratagem to do so. On arriving one day at the entrance to the hall of audience, the Envoy found no means of going in except by a wicket, which would compel him to stoop very low. With great presence of mind and considerable audacity the Ambassador turned around and entered backward, thus saving the honour of his country.

## JAPANESE ATHLETICS.

### Once a Year All the School Children Engage in Athletics.

Athletics hold an important but subordinate position in the schools of Japan. Once a year there is a gathering of all the students in a district to engage in athletic contests. In those seen by Mr. Hearn, and described in Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan, six thousand boys and girls from all the schools within a distance of twenty-five miles were entered to take part. A circular race-track, roomy enough for an army, allowed four different kinds of games to be performed at the same time.

There were races between the best runners of different schools; and races in which the runners were tied together in pairs, the left leg of one to the right leg of the other.

Little girls—as pretty as butterflies, in their sky-blue hakama and many colored robes—contested in races in which each one had to pick up as she ran three balls of different colors out of a number scattered over the turf. The most wonderful spectacle was the dumb-bell exercise. Six thousand boys and girls, massed in ranks about five hundred deep; six thousand pairs of arms rising and falling exactly together; six thousand pairs of sandalled feet advancing or retreating together at the signal of the masters of gymnastics, directing all from the tops of little wooden towers; six thousand voices chanting at once the "One, two, three," of the dumb-bell drill: "Ichi, ni—san, shi—go, roku—shichi, hachi."

### Pleasant for the Neighbors.

Friend—I should think your daughter's four hours' practice on the piano would drive you crazy. Hostess—Oh, not at all. She opens all the windows, and most of the sound goes out doors.

### Contemporaries.

Professor—The leather apron as worn by the blacksmith is mentioned by Pliny as in use at this time. Student—I'll bet that calico apron that the landlady wears at our boarding house was one of its contemporaries.

### A Little Wise Caution.

First Burglar (at back window of big store)—I've got the hole big enough now, and we can get in without any more trouble. Second Burglar—All right; come ahead; but don't make so much noise. Some o' those ere watchmen might happen to be awake.