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**CHARTING THE OCEANS**

**LITTLE KNOWN DEPARTMENT HAS A GREAT RECORD.**

It was London who first put Hydrographic Surveying on Scientific Basis in the interests of Commerce—Alexander Dalrymple was the first Official in Charge. But He Was "Too Jealous."

An application was made by the Attorney-General in the House of Lords, says The London Telegraph, which serves to call attention to one of the most important, and also least recognized, fields of activity of the Board of Admiralty—the task of charting the seas. In 1811 His Majesty's cruiser Hawk and the White Star liner Olympic came into collision in the Solent, and legal proceedings resulted. Now, Sir John Simon, on behalf of the crown, has had to make a singular confession. This great anchorage, perhaps, the most famous in the world, by reason of its use by the British fleet, and its long association with the sport of yachting. And yet it has been discovered at this late hour that the charts which were employed in the trials, alike in the High Court and the Court of Appeal, were inaccurate. They showed the buoy wrongly. Consequently the crown has asked that new charts may be put in. The admissibility of this fresh evidence will be argued when the case comes formally before the Law Lords. The mistake which has been made in this instance will not, we are sure, be found to reflect generally on British charts. Yet in the history of British sea service nothing is more astounding than the indifference with which the naval authorities of this country in common, it must be confessed, with those of most other nations—regarded for many centuries the search for a scientific basis of navigation. Perhaps the old sailors rather liked the mystery of the sea, with its wondrous superstitions and its elaborate but confused mythology. They may have thought that the very mystery of the sea, in the charm of a seaman's life, it is conceivable that since ports were scarce in those early days, and the sea was a very lonely place, they had a platonic affection for all the details of the seas and oceans—not forgetting the Nereides—their deities may have led them to forbear having knowledge in which, unknown, but fascinating and powerful creatures had hitherto been supreme, living in gorgeous palaces and attended by beautiful sea-maidens with sinuous forms, lustrous eyes, and long, flowing hair. On the other hand, these old, rugged sailors, who were nothing of scholars, may have had insufficient acquaintance with the work of the pioneer scientists among the ancients to realize that navigation could ever become an exact science. Whatever the cause—and we prefer the former to the latter supposition—the old seamen of the royal navy did not pry into the ocean depths; they were content sometimes to be very much at sea rather than intrude into realms where personalities of such mysterious attributes and charms had held sway since the earliest days of man's history.

It was unromantic landmen—in England at least—who first conceived the idea of investigating the sea and studying its moods and tenses. They were led to invade the under kingdom not so much by a thirst for knowledge as by lust for gain. It is an unhappy fact, but there it is. Navigation owes everything to the business man, and in its most recent and exact development to the East India Company. This great trading concern, realizing the importance of making plain the route from east to west, first established a hydrographer's department. To the charge of that office, towards the end of the eighteenth century, Alexander Dalrymple, a man of wide experience of the sea and outstanding initiative, was appointed. Prior to this the Admiralty had had a poor opinion of the science, but in 1785, Earl Spencer, one of the most famous of our First Lords, decided that the casual cartographical service then at the disposal of the fleet should be improved, and Dalrymple became the first hydro-

grapher of the royal navy. He, with "one man and a boy," laid the foundations of one of the most remarkable and beneficial institutions in the world. Throughout his life he was either pursued by an evil fate or washed himself in his own errors. In 1805, he was dismissed for "excess of zeal"—possibly at that time this was a crime in a Government department. At any rate Dalrymple went, to die three weeks afterwards of a broken heart. His successor, Captain Thomas Mudge, perfected the organization, founded an intelligence service, in order that the charts might be kept up to date; organized a regular system of surveys, and at last prevailed on the Admiralty to allow the charts to be sold to the public. This last innovation was in no small measure responsible for the healthy growth of the work for it was soon apparent that merchant skippers and yachtsmen were anxious to buy at reasonable prices the products of the Hydrographer's Office.

To-day the sea has no mystery. There are still vast tracts of the land surface of the world which have never been trodden by the foot of man; but the "Seven Seas" are an open book to the instructed sailor. He can navigate his ship from one side of the world to the other with a facility and sureness not surpassed by a London cabman as he threads his way amidst the wonderful nomenclature of the streets of our newest suburbia; and at last the sailor's eyes rest on some port which he may never have seen before, but whose every salient feature he knows with a certain knowledge, because he has provided himself with charts.

**FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**NICKEL PROFITS OFF IN THE LAST YEAR.**

International Company Reports Earnings Were Half a Million Less—Commercial Tidings.

Toronto, June 10.—As the International Nickel company is virtually a close corporation there is not much local interest in its financial statement, except in so far as the profits shown may affect the plans of the Canadian Nickel corporation, a combination of local and London financiers which threaten to enter the lists against the nickel merger.

The International Nickel company practically divides the world's markets with the Mond nickel interests. The company not only controls the Sudbury enterprises, but also extensive nickel interests in New Caledonia. The company's earnings are reported to have shown a decrease of \$542,215 for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1914. The profits for that period were \$4,792,664.

**Big Holder of Hollinger.**

Cobalt, June 10.—The Anglo-French Exploration Co., Limited, capitalized at £15,000,000 and possessing assets of £1,028,660 in the form of holding of stocks, shares, and debentures, has issued its report for the year 1913. Of the thirty-three principal companies in which interests are held, seventeen paid or declared dividends during the year. Railway and mining company stocks, shares, and debentures are the principal holdings. In Canada the company's chief asset is 20,000 shares of Hollinger Gold Mines, Limited.

**Arranging Brazilian Loan.**

London, June 10.—The Financial News says there is reason to believe that the negotiations for a large Brazilian loan are approaching a head. The Brazilian government has a special representative in London. He is conferring with a French banking group as well as London institutions. Germany may participate also. The sum asked for is \$130,000,000.

**EVOLUTION OF TENNIS.**

The Game Was First Played With Gloves Instead of Rackets.

Tennis as we know it to-day originated on the continent of Europe. In the earliest form of the game, known in medieval England as "handball," the players simply passed the ball from one to the other by means of the naked hand. In due course gloves were invented by the Italians, and when later cords of tennis were stretched across them the ball was enabled to rebound with much greater force. From these gloves it was an easy step to the racket, the face of which was at first composed of wood, parchment or loosely stretched gut, and such primitive implements are mentioned by Chaucer in 1380.

Rackets were first strung diagonally, but by 1632 they had attained to some resemblance to their present form. Between hand play and the general use of the racket there was a transition period when one player used his hands and the other a bat. The first courts were simply of itself. At one time the French played jeu de paume with a cork ball across a line marked on the ground. Presently a bank of earth about two feet in height was substituted, and this in turn was replaced by a single cord stretched across the centre of a prescribed space. Sometimes a sheet fringe hung from the cord, and this gradually increased in length until it developed into the modern net.

Uncovered courts were at first the fashion, but so rapidly did the game come to the fore that in order to make the play independent of the humors of the weather clerk roofs were added.

By the end of the sixteenth century there were 1,800 tennis courts in Paris alone. Now there are under a dozen in the whole of France, those in the Tuilleries, at Cannes, Deauville and Versailles being the most famous.

Of existing English courts the most ancient is that at Hampton Court, which was built by Henry VIII.—London Chronicle.

**Commission Rules in Leeds.**

Leeds is making an experiment in municipal administration, new to England, under commission government.

The innovation followed the recent strike of municipal employees, the investigation into which revealed a lack of co-ordination in labor matters between the municipal departments and also a tendency to regard municipal employment as political spoil.

The municipal administration of Leeds will be concentrated in the hands of a small commission, which can be held more responsible than possible in the case of a large city council. If the Yorkshire experiment proves successful it is suggested that the London County Council might advantageously follow suit and even to the length of engaging a general manager.

A salary of \$50,000, it is urged, would not be excessive for a good man, who would undoubtedly be able to make a large reduction in the present system of government in the metropolis.

**Dinner Table Language.**

English is the sea language and French is the dinner table language, and we cannot understand the dinner menu drawn up in German (as the Kaiser decrees) instead of French. We tried in Smollett's time to translate hors d'oeuvre into "whets," and later on the attempt has been made with "appetizers," which suggest only "cocktails." "Fat liver pastes" has been suggested as an equivalent for "pate de foie gras." But none of these will serve. The dish with its compounds must be distinguished by a polite tongue, and there is much difference between the delicate veal of the French and the decadent frankness of the German.—Pall Mall Gazette.

**Indigestion and Lethargy.**

H. G. Wells is among those who believe that indigestion is an aid to successful authorship. Some years ago, when called upon to answer the question, "What is the first step toward literary production?" Mr. Wells replied: "It is imperative, if you wish to write with any power of freshness at all that you should utter your indigestion." Victor Hugo appears to have done his best to bring on indigestion. Edmund Lockroy states in his memoirs that it was Hugo's invariable custom when he was tired with cravfish to devour the head, claws, and tail; and to swallow the skin and pipe whenever he ate an orange.

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