
Volume I.

SEPTEMBER, 1910

Number 5

THE LOOKOUT



THE SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK
ONE STATE STREET

AN APPEAL

WE intend to build a new Institute that will be a model to its kind throughout the world. The land is purchased—the best available site in the city. The plans are drawn. We are ready. And still we delay.

It should be begun at once. Otherwise it will not be ready for use next May when our present lease expires. Until it is done we cannot expand our work and help more than a very limited number of the seamen of the port. But we cannot begin until we have more subscriptions. Nothing else delays us and hampers this work. We have raised \$405,000. We need \$285,000 more to completely pay for the land and building.

The Institute relies upon us to secure these subscriptions and start the building. We are doing the best we can, but it is a big undertaking. We need your help as well as your subscription. If all the friends of the Institute would rally to our assistance and carry this appeal to their friends the remainder would soon be raised and we could have our new building, free and clear, by May 1, 1911.

That is what we are asking you to do. Now is the time that your help is needed. Your subscription may be made payable any time before the building is completed, but we must know that you stand back of us and that the money will be forthcoming.

In making this appeal we confidently believe that those who help to make the new Institute possible will find it a continual source of honor and pride, and that, in the future, they will be grateful to us for persuading them to have a part in the building of it. Can you not persuade yourself and others to help us now and generously. The building was described in the May issue of *THE LOOKOUT*.

THE LOOKOUT

Published by the Seamen's Church Institute of New York
RT. REV. DAVID H. GREER, D.D., LL.D., President
FRANK T. WARBURTON, Secretary-Treasurer
OFFICE, ONE STATE STREET, NEW YORK

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The North River Station

The work of the North River Station is different from that of the State street work or from that of The Breakwater in Brooklyn. It has neither the busy shipping bureau, nor the lodging and restaurant departments. From force of circumstances it has to do its work on quieter lines. Through the admirable system uniting all three stations, men applying here for lodging and meals are sent to The Breakwater, and others seeking a berth are referred to the shipping bureau at State street. Here we take care of the sailor's money as is done at the Battery Station, transmitting it to distant homes, or banking it. Here, the sailor calls for mail or checks his baggage. Each month we receive an average of eight hundred letters. Here, a reading room with daily papers is provided, likewise a game room on the second floor, where, from October to June, entertainments and lectures are held every Tuesday evening at which time hot coffee and doughnuts are served. Magazines and other reading matter, Bibles and prayer books are distributed.

The staff consists of chaplain, lay-assistant and sexton, who are in regular attendance and in residence. The organist and quartet choir complete the staff.

The chaplain and lay-assistant visit the hospitals and the ships, coming in touch with men generally, invite them to the services, sit down and have a chat with

them, distribute announcement cards for the Sunday or Friday evening services or the Tuesday evening entertainments, which cards include the following notice: "Note: The chaplain will respond to whatever needs seamen may have for his services, sickness, accident, private communion, any office of the church, or any friendly conference," and the value of the readiness to do, whether by contribution or by personal service, unquestionably makes a foreign shore seem a more hospitable and friendly place.

There seems to be no limit to the possibilities in this West Side work. The large and splendidly equipped American Seaman's Friend Society's plant at 507 West street, made possible by Mrs. Russel Sage and other friends, the Roman Catholic Seamen's Mission under Father McGrath, at 420 West street, the Seamen's Christian Association at 399 West street, under the experienced hand of Mr. Stafford Wright, are busy, helpful, needful places, doing a work much larger than our own. There is room and place for all and the one aim and purpose, the welfare of seamen.

The removal of the Cunard, White Star, Atlantic Transport, American, Red Star and other lines to the new piers, separates us by some twenty blocks from the important scene of action. We have earnest need, therefore, at 341 West street, to let seamen know that everything at the North River Station

stands for standard things—for the best interests, morally and socially, of the men of the sea, and if services are made helpful, and a well-selected course of entertainments and lectures provided for Tuesday evenings, and friendships established, twenty or more blocks may make no difference.

There are distinct needs at the North River Station, and these are as follows:

Need No. 1: Funds to provide the course of Tuesday evening entertainments and lectures. The chaplain has had his first subscription of \$50. To put the course through successfully, between \$300 and \$400 will be necessary.

Need No. 2: A large coffee urn for the winter night cup of coffee after the entertainment and at other times—West street is fringed with saloons and several are on our block.

Need No. 3: Funds to purchase copies of the new missionary hymnal which, it is hoped, will be published soon after the general convention. The sailor loves to sing and the new hymnal contains hymns which he can and will sing.

Need No. 4: A water or electric motor for blowing the organ, which at present is done by hand—an inconvenience and an expense.

Need No. 5: Magazines and reading matter sent prepaid, for distribution.

Need No. 6: Flowers for the Sunday services which, on Monday, will be sent to sick sailors in the hospitals.

Need No. 7: A gramophone or talking machine.

The men plying across the ocean or up and down the coast, away from home, away from restraints, need the church on Sunday, need the week-night entertainment, need the day and evening reading room, and whatever encouragement can be brought to bear, and thus it is that the

first and last need is for willing friends. The seaman, in making a stand for the right, needs especially in his peculiar condition, the support of an Aaron and a Hur in staying up his hands in order that he may be more than a match for his foes.

An Appreciated Gift

During the last few months the work done by the Institute through its several departments has been described in THE LOOKOUT, and the description has met with responses as varied as the work of the Institute itself. It has been followed by gifts of many characters, indicating that our readers assess every part of the work with importance, yet their valuations are not identical.

The last gift to be received at this office has a pretty story behind it that is worth the telling.

The story begins about ten years back when Miss Pauline Corey, now Sister Mary Irene of St. Mary's Sisterhood of the P. E. Church, volunteered her services as a violinist to the Floating Church of Our Saviour. Miss Corey was a devoted assistant, interested in every phase of the Institute's work. One day she heard Mr. Mansfield make an appeal for pictures to decorate the reading room and promptly presented him with several sketches she had made. The sketches were framed and hung in the building where they were enjoyed by its patrons.

Several years later the Ways and Means Committee was looking for a suitable picture for the front page of its first circular. Mr. Kleinschmidt, who had charge of this department, was almost in despair when he happened to notice one of Miss Corey's

sketches, a picture of an old salt standing at the wheel of his "wind-jammer." He appreciated its appropriateness at once and made it familiar to those who have received the department's blue circular.

A few weeks ago a copy of this circular fell into the hands of Mr. Meyer H. Lehmann. The old salt looked very familiar to him. He recognized it as a copy of a picture hanging in his collection; or, at least, he thought he did. He called at the Institute with a circular in his pocket and mentioned his suspicions to Mr. Mansfield.

Together they took Miss Corey's sketch down from the wall and examined it. Sure enough the name of the original artist was printed across the bottom of the sketch. Then Mr. Mansfield told Mr. Lehmann the story of Miss Corey's interest in the work, of her contribution of her services and the sketches, and of the friends and money the picture had won for the Institute. Mr. Lehmann promptly offered to present the picture to the Institute. In a few days it was hanging in the chaplain's office, waiting for an opportunity to grace the new building.

A gilt label upon the handsome frame bears this inscription:
The Pilot, by E. Renouf. Presented by Meyer H. Lehmann.

Renouf's pictures are familiar to all picture lovers and "The Pilot" is one of his best works. It is a large canvass, 24x30, painted with considerable freedom and with a thorough understanding of the weight, strength and form of waves. The pilot, in his oilskins, is bringing his ship through a rough sea overhung with leaden clouds; a harbinger, let us hope, of our emergence from the storm of

money-raising to the larger opportunities of the new building.

Novel Life Preserver

An invention of such obvious simplicity and utility like many before it that the wonder is that it was not thought of before, is described in a recent *Technical World Magazine*. It is a combination life preserver and steamer chair or camp stool such as is used on excursion steamboats. The slab of cork or other unsinkable material of which the preserver now consists, several inches thick, some three feet long and twenty-one inches wide, simply takes the place of two of the legs of the stool, and strung from its top to the cross bar of the other two legs is the canvas that forms the seat as now, and under it a suspender-like strapping to fasten around the body in case of need. The delay of the wild scramble and crush-to-death for preservers overhead and under cabin seats is avoided, as the passenger picks up the stool he is sitting on and fastens it to his chest. The preserver has undergone the most severe test on both ocean and river. Two women weighing 130 pounds each have successfully kept afloat on one, and it will hold a person weighing 300 pounds indefinitely. Steamship men and life savers along the coast who have witnessed these tests speak of the invention in the highest terms. The person who has one of these life preservers strapped to him will be able always without any effort on his part to maintain his equilibrium in the water, whether or not he retains consciousness.

We are still paying monthly rental upon our piano; no one has given us an old piano as yet.

THE LOOKOUT

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Subscription Price - - One Dollar a Year

NOTE—Address all communications to
ARCHIBALD R. MANSFIELD, Superintendent

Henry Dexter

By the death of Mr. Henry Dexter, the Institute loses one of its oldest and best friends. Ever since 1871, Mr. Dexter was identified with the Institute as one of its managers. For thirty-nine years he gave to it his active and financial support, and when he died, July 11th, he left it a legacy of \$25,000.

Mr. Dexter was one of those who identified themselves with the work in a personal manner. He was a frequent visitor at the stations until he was hindered by the infirmities of age; and he was a regular attendant at the meetings of the Board of Managers. In years gone by it was not at all unusual to find him, on Sunday afternoons, at the religious services held in a tent on the docks about Coenties Slip, near the site chosen for the new building. He well knew the worth of the work which he has endorsed so emphatically by his splendid bequest.

During the past month, despite the absence of so many on their vacations, the Building Fund has approached another corner. The total of subscriptions is now very close to \$400,000. This is very gratifying to the Building Committee, and their gratification will, doubtless, be shared by all friends of the Institute; in other words, by the readers of THE LOOKOUT.

But gratifying as this report is, it must not be forgotten that \$75,000 of this

money is conditioned upon our raising the entire sum needed before May 1, 1911. Therefore, it has not seemed prudent to the committee to begin building until we have at least \$40,000 more in hand.

Yet we should begin building at once. The revised plans have been completed. There is no reason for delay on that score.

It is impossible to carry out the larger plans of the Institute until we have more commodious quarters.

The shipping department cannot become more independent of the Ring until the hotel accommodations are increased.

The Breakwater is an old building. It needs renovations. But money spent for that purpose would be spent inadvisedly.

More important than these considerations is the seaman's need for the home we are planning to provide him. The Breakwater has been so crowded that men have had to sleep on cots in the halls during the hot summer nights. This emphasizes the urgency of our appeal, and it is for the seaman that we are pleading.

The staff of the Institute can do its work from almost any inconvenient place. It is not concerned about itself, but the work—that's another story. It ought not to be hampered.

If you have made a contribution, perhaps you can secure the support of a friend. If you have not contributed as yet, please remember that this is a time when we sorely need assurance of your support.

The Sailor and His Master

Practically all the evils arising from the present conditions among sailors' boarding-houses spring from the pecu-

liar customs and laws governing the payment of seamen's wages. Before entering into a discussion of the value of our work, two of these in particular must be understood, because protection for the sailor ashore can only be provided by combating and finally eliminating the evils which tradition has associated with the administration of these laws.

The first is simple enough to describe. The master of a ship is generally allowed one or two days before he must pay the wage due. Every man is entitled legally to a certain portion of this wage upon his lawful departure from the ship, but just here custom enters in, and hitherto the sailor has been kept ignorant of this fact. The result is very evident. He must go ashore penniless and dependent upon credit, at least for twenty-four hours.

The second is somewhat more difficult to describe, for, in spite of its apparently innocent nature, it is at the very root of practically the entire list of impositions which the sailor experiences at the hands of the unscrupulous boarding-house master. A seaman may make an allotment of funds in advance, to be paid to members of his immediate family, or to the original creditor in settlement of any just debt for "board and clothing." The limitless possibilities of the lax interpretation of this last phrase makes it an easy matter for the sailor to sign away his entire "allotment" to any one who will trust him for a meal and an old pair of boots.

A most unusual state of affairs arises as a result of these two laws, namely, that the sailor is never under any obligation to have money at hand, for his credit is always good, even if he lands without a cent in his pocket, for he has his wages due him the next day,

and any creditor who will take the trouble to follow him to the "pay-off" may be sure of ample satisfaction. On the other hand, when all the wages are spent, and the man is again penniless, all he has to do is to signify that he is willing to go to sea again within a short time, and his allotment is certain to cover most handsomely whatever financial obligations he may incur.

The detrimental effect of being entirely dependent upon credit at all times is undeniable. Yet we must face the fact that such is the condition of most seamen that enter the port of New York to be paid off. After a long voyage of monotonous labor under most unfavorable conditions the sailor comes down from his ship, homeless and eager for excitement which will make him forget his hard lot in life. At that moment he is most willing to make friends with any one who will furnish him the wherewithal to enjoy himself or forget himself as the case may be, and to procure lodging until the eventful hour when his money will be placed at his disposal.

Now the boarding-house masters recognize the fact that if they can secure his patronage and thereby make the man pay back to themselves on account of their lodging charge the money they have just lent, and then, the next day, receive the amount of the original loan, they stand to profit thereby. But the trouble they take to be at the ship's side to meet the incoming vessels, and the care with which they follow their boarders to the paying-off, indicates that it is no "dollar a day for bed and meals" which prompts their carefulness. Most of the first-class houses of this kind have discovered an easy method of increasing that debt, in the incredibly short

time of one night as a general rule, to an amount which very materially diminishes the poor sailor's balance. That method is universally recognized in all hotel business catering to every class. An attractive bar and a secluded back room occupies the entire first floor.

The wily landlord on the dock picks the newcomer out. A warmer welcome could not be given to a long-lost brother. The excited, thirsty stranger hesitates; he has not a cent in his pockets. His "friend" laughs at the idea of trifling over such a paltry matter as a couple of dollars as he slips a good cigar into the sailor's hand. They take a drink together at a near-by saloon, another at the next, and finally they reach one where his friend assumes an air of suave proprietorship and orders drinks all around for the stranger and some of his shipmates, who have also put themselves into the hands of the friend who so kindly met them upon the dock, in spite of the fact that they have known him before and could probably tell to a detail the course of future events.

"Come on, sons, shift your bags over there and step up; your credit's good here." They proceed to treat all around at this generous invitation of the host. Some new flushed faces appear as the evening wears on, and those who have been paid off that day "blow" the crowd. The games begin in the back room, and gambling gets its share of money into the pockets of the sociable landlord. The newest comers are watched to see that they do not go too far, for they must be comparatively sober when they apply at the consul's for their pay the next morning.

In the small hours of the night they are ushered, or, as is more often the case, dragged upstairs to the sleeping

apartments. If the house is full, two, or even three, may be packed into one bed. Everybody is more or less drunk, and nobody is disturbed by the amount of filth abounding everywhere. Perhaps a fight or so has to be settled before the dawn breaks and a short period of quiet ensues.

Out of a stupid slumber the stranger is rudely awakened and hauled out of bed. If the effects of the night before have brought on a splitting headache he gets a drink or so to square up before his landlord starts for the consul's with him.

Coming out with his pay bulging from his pocket, he offers to settle his debt and is astounded at its proportions. He grumbles a little, but, then, what would he have done for bed and food, and especially drink, had not this kind gentleman befriended him? They are soon friends again and arrange that his place shall be reserved at the house. Oh, yes, he will be in for that evening, where no check is kept on him, and he drinks and gambles freely.

The next morning there is war. His bag has been stolen, and he finds that his money has every cent of it been spent or gambled from him. He can storm all he likes, but nobody pays any attention. He has no money; why should they?

Remorse begins to harass the poor fellow. What a fool he has been! He should have known better! Now he will quit and never touch another drop! Then he discovers, to his astonishment, that he has hitherto only paid for drinks; board and lodging must be settled for, which he cannot do, and therefore he must get out. Just as he is sneaking for the door, the master catches and pulls him in again. There is a ship

sailing for Buenos Ayres in a day or so, and he needs a man for her. "All you've got to do is to sign over your advance to me, and we'll call it square." What can the fellow do? He had planned this time to keep his money, get a ship home, whither he has not been for many years, and settle down. Yet now he needs must go to South America, or out upon the streets, as this "friend" of his may choose to dictate.

A day or so later, quite reconciled to his fate, he signs on. The note bearing his signature is soon in the hands of the boarding-house master, who, apparently in a fit of wonderful generosity—as he pockets a note for \$20 for four days' board and clothing—presents his victim with a fine-looking old bag, with all the necessary gear for the trip, and a dollar or so. In thankfulness that same dollar is handed back across the bar for drinks, which soon make him care little whether he has any kind of a bag.

This might be considered lucky, for the one well stuffed with tatters and old boots, which he really carries off with him, is worth mighty little. Then he gets on the ship. It is too late to object, and off he sails, weary, stupid, penniless, half his future wages already spent, and all his fond hopes and ambitions irretrievably shattered.

Now, of course, this is not always what takes place. Sometimes the man has sense enough to avoid the pitfalls laid for him. In many cases an even more revolting story might be recited. More often, however, the events just related are most apt to happen, for, if they did not, we are convinced that there would be little to encourage the business of managing sailors' boarding-houses. The Seamen's Church Institute has undertaken to combat the evils of this ex-

isting system of fleecing the helpless sailor, and in this particular phase of the effort our hotel for seamen, the Breakwater, plays a most prominent part. In a subsequent article we hope to describe how it serves to check the inroads of this band of boarding-house masters upon the purses, bodies and souls of the man of the deep.

Breakwater Notes

The "First Aid to the Injured" lecture course has thus far been more successful than we had anticipated. The men attend the classes in large numbers. We had expected groups of eight or ten, instead of which we generally have fifteen or twenty present. One evening twenty-six men gathered in our improvised clinic, at the end of the dining room. They sat in a large semi-circle about a table upon which was collected an almost amusing group of surgical implements, such as canes, brooms, pillows, pipes, straw, cans, barrel staves, cigar boxes and so on throughout the list of such things as one may have at hand at almost any time and in almost any place. In the center sat a volunteer patient, who suffered now from an imaginary gash in the head, now from a severed artery in the arm, and so on until all the most common forms of bleeding had been discussed; each part in turn was bandaged and tourniquet set in place.

The explanations of Dr. Pugh were simple and brief. The men listened in rapt attention so that the hour had slipped past almost before we were aware. Mr. McCann sang for us before the lecture and again at the end, while we were waiting for ice cream to be brought in. Pipes were lit and a

conversation about the topic of the evening was soon under way. Some men questioned the doctor on points that were not quite clear to them, while others practiced bandaging each other up.

The other lectures have been much like the one described; at all times the order and attention have been excellent. The serious attitude of the men toward the subject has shown that they appreciate the importance of such knowledge.

In spite of the fact that no seaman can take all the lectures without a break (because of the transient nature of his calling), we are pleased to notice that those who have sailed after attending one or two lectures, come again gladly when they return to the Breakwater.

Much depends upon the interest taken in our work by those who can play upon some musical instrument or sing to us. It adds tremendously to the attractiveness of the service, lecture or class when the sound of music is heard from time to time. This month we desire to thank our good friends who have come to our assistance, in spite of warm weather and impending vacations, namely: Misses Matilda and Elizabeth Singleton, Mr. Roland Behrens, Mr. William McCann and Mr. Walker.

Sailor Correspondence

Georgetown, British Guiana.

Dear Sir: My son, C—— J——, has asked me to always send his letters to your care and address, which I have done, and he has them delivered safely. I hope you will pardon my troubling you,

but I received a letter from him a few days ago, telling me how seriously ill he is, and is at a sanitarium in Norfolk with an attack of pneumonia, and that perhaps before his letter reached me he might be dead; that the ladies of the sanitarium was exceedingly kind to him. He also told me that I must write you, telling you of his illness, and to ask you to let me know what is the result. I now take the chance that is leaving to-day to write you, begging you to be so good to make inquiries after him for me. And to write me at your earliest opportunity informing me the nature of his illness. I have also written him, which you will do me the great kindness to enclose in an envelope and address it where he is at present. You will also find a small piece of the envelope he sent with printed name of the sanitarium. This no doubt will act as a guide to his address. My poor boy, it was no wish of his parents to adopt a sea life, but boys out in this colony are very prone to be disobedient and to accept the advice of reckless companions. His father's and my desire was to give him the advantage of a good education and place him in an office. This he would not listen to, but neglected school to roam about. Now I am sure he regrets and would give much no doubt to be advised by us, but as he has brought no disgrace to us, we are bound as his parents, to sympathize with him and to let him feel we feel that load which only a parent feels for their offspring. If I were wealthy I should send out to him at once to fetch him home, and if death comes, let it find him with us. But if he is alive and able to stand the voyage he must write me.

With kind regards, I remain, dear sir,

Yours sincerely,

E. J——.

REPORT FOR JULY

Departments.

The following synopsis of the work done in the various departments during the month of July, gives a fair idea of the workings of the Institute:

July, 1910.

Banking Department.

July 1, cash on hand.....	\$15,778.10
Deposits	7,320.82
	\$23,098.92
Payments \$3,433.62 trans-	
mitted)	7,527.84
	\$15,571.08

Shipping Department.

Number of vessels shipped entire by Seamen's Church Institute.....	19
Number of men provided with employment in port.....	89
Number of men shipped.....	188
	Total
	277

Reading Rooms.

Total attendance.....	8,989
Letters written and received.....	2,004
Packages reading given.....	913
Number pieces baggage checked..	614

Relief Department.

Assisted	31
Sent to Legal Aid.....	41
Sent to Hospital and Dispensary..	2
Visits to Hospitals.....	4
Sick seamen visited.....	15
Visits to ships in port.....	110

Religious Department.

Number of services.....	20
Attendance total.....	428
Communion services.....	3
Weddings	1

Institute Boat "Sentinel."

Trips made.....	40
Visits to vessels.....	54
Men transported.....	173
Pieces baggage transported.....	264