

# The LOOKOUT



**\$1,044,000 is Still Needed to  
Finish and Equip the New Annex**

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

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# The Lookout

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## *The* LOOKOUT

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EDMUND L. BAYLIES  
President

FRANK T. WARBURTON  
Secretary-Treasurer

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*Address all communications to*  
ARCHIBALD R. MANSFIELD, D. D.  
Superintendent  
or  
ELEANOR BARNES  
Editor, The Lookout

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## *Progress in the Annex*



"Hey, look out where you're goin'!"—this is the greeting of welcome for the "tourist" eager to see how the New Building is progressing.

Underfoot, overhead, to the right and to the left are dangers for the unwary. And if the tourist scorns an easy entrance through quite prosaic doors, and slips under a heavy canvas

dropped down between the fourth floor mezzanine that is and the fourth floor mezzanine that is to be, the danger takes shape in the form of pipes.

In one corner a cheery gang of plumbers grapple for chubby iron pipes coming up from the floor below; toward the other end of the room steamfitters hoist long slender black



pipes to their mates teetering near the ceiling on a swinging scaffold. Neither group heeds the other, but how they do love to talk to the "interested third party."

"Them? O, they're disappointed steam-fitters — they're plumbers. Now you take a guy that wants to be a steam-fitter, he's gotta have brains. On a big job like this, you gotta be able to concentrate. It's gonna be a swell building, and us steam-fitters is the guys for the job."

And in the plumber's corner they say, "Aw, don't let them kid you. Just look us over. You gotta admit we don't look so dumb." Apparently no hoister of pipes ever suffers from an inferiority complex.

Working down from the twelfth floor, the electricians are laying pipes to hold the electric wires. One wonders who will hold the palm for super-intelligence when the electricians and plumbers and steam-fitters all meet on some still un piped floor between the fourth and eighth.

The carpenters, however, are a peace-loving lot. Perhaps because their trade is almost as

old as time, they feel that it has a dignity not accorded to younger trades. Hidden away in odd little corners they work quietly building new shacks for the already large village of contractor's shacks on the fifth floor. They, too, are willing to stop and pass the time of day. But their subjects of conversation are of a different order. They are the philosophers of the building trades. What questions they can ask about seamen! Lovers of buildings, sign and symbol of security on land, they are at a loss to understand the urge that drives men to live on anything as fancy-free as a ship. "Chips" of the land and "chips" of the sea seem to have only their mastery of wood and their love of leisurely reflection in common.

On the main floor the tourist finds a roundish white tomb-like structure that is to hold the new organ. One of the carpenters lining the tomb with sound-proof composition board stops his work to talk of trees and dogs and suburbs, but his remarks pivot always about the central idea in his mind, "Yes, it'll be a fine building when it's done."

Most of the work at present is in the lower half of the building. At the entrance sits the Guardsman beaming at all the goings-on, thinking to himself that they also serve who only stand and watch. By some caprice of circumstance an old photograph of the Floating Church has been hung on the wall of the twelfth floor. If it could speak, it would without doubt add its voice to that of the workers, the Guardsman, and all the friends of the Institute and say, "Yes, it will be a fine building."

Interested seamen lounging on the Floor of the Seven Seas peer over wooden partitions to

watch the builders at work extending the lobby. The Guardsman willingly points out the location of the new chapel and the new dining room. Below the street level two pleasant Irishmen are knocking down the wall of the old kitchen. Below the street level the empty kitchen is now like a futurist's paradise with its long angular spears of light coming down through the makeshift elevator shaft.

In the past the friends of the Institute have not failed to provide a fine building when first they saw the need. Surely they will carry on. \$1,044,000 is still needed to complete our fine building.

## *Training Cadets*

The policy of our Merchant Marine School is that an American Merchant Marine manned by Americans is a national necessity.

We have contributed and we are still contributing to this end by training seamen for officer-ship and by raising the standards for officers.

We now propose to make a further direct contribution by

training for officers American-born boys under twenty-one years of age now eligible or serving as cadets.

Recent action on the part of Congress provided for the carrying of deck boys or cadets on American-flag mail steamers, the number depending upon the tonnage of the ship. It also removed the former objection to the system by further providing



that these boys shall live under the supervision of officers and in their quarters.

Our Merchant Marine School proposes to supplement the practical training these boys receive aboard ship with more concentrated instruction in navigation, marine engineering and seamanship during six-month shore leaves.

We are at present endeavoring to interest the steamship companies carrying cadets in extending the necessary furloughs for study and for taking the examinations leading to officers' licenses.

While actuated by a genuine patriotic desire to thus be of service to our national shipping interests, we are at the same time eager to extend to the youth of our land an opportunity to follow the sea and to make of it a dignified profession.

We wish to give each American-born boy, no matter in what state of the Union he may reside, an opportunity to get a theoretical and practical training in navigation, marine engineering and seamanship.

This then is part of our contribution to the inevitably better American-flag merchant ma-

rine of to-morrow—the selection and training of boys of good character and creditable elementary schooling so that they may put to sea as well equipped for their calling as boys of any other nation.

#### SEA-BORED

One often hears of the monotony of going to sea, but it took Leslie Brown to impress upon us just how dull it sometimes can be.

Leslie Brown says he is twenty. He looks about fourteen, with his round red apple face.

This seeming child, now turned seaman, has spent two years (of all places for a youngster like him) in the French Foreign Legion.

He finds the fo'c'stle comparatively unexciting and this is his Cockney explanation of the reason:

"Aw, lookin' at the sime guy's fice all the time. Mikes you want to punch 'is fice in just to chinge the shipe of it, so's to 'ave somethin' diff'rent to look at."

An original idea to be sure, but not so desirable from the standpoint of Leslie Brown's shipmates!

## *The Modern Sailor*



CAPTAIN SIR ARTHUR ROSTRON

There is nothing on record to indicate that they had grapefruit in the Garden of Eden. Perhaps it was because they didn't have Luther Burbank in the Garden of Eden.

But they had apples.

And apples—or worse yet, *an* apple—caused the downfall of man.

In these modern days it is the grapefruit that has caused the downfall of the sailor. Grapefruit for breakfast has made





1827—A BLACK BALL LINER

Jack Tar "soft," so we are told by a ship owner who harks back to the "good old days."

We hear so much of those old sailing days—the days of "wooden ships and iron men"—men who didn't have grapefruit for breakfast. Sometimes we almost verge on believing that "gone is all that made for sterling seamanship," when along comes no less an authority than Captain Sir Arthur H. Rostron of the S.S. *Berengaria* with as-

surance quite to the contrary.

It is significant that Captain Rostron, after 42 years of seamanship, nine of which were under sail, should make this statement:\*

"Men are better sailors than they ever were, ships are better than they ever were, and everybody is happier, from the cabin boy to the commander and from the immigrant to the first class passenger."

\* *Saturday Evening Post*, July 23, 1927.

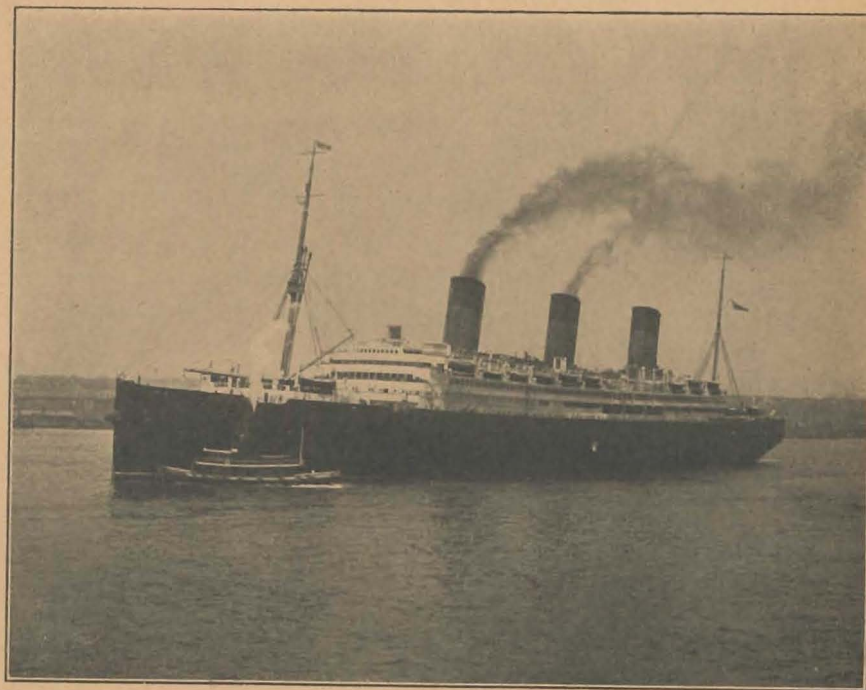
After a bit of apology for "stepping on the toes of tradition," Captain Rostron proceeds:

"I am far from critical and have nothing but the highest praise for the sailor of the old days. With the implements at his command he did marvelously well. The reason his successor is a more skilled craftsman is that science has made him so. Navigation is now a well-oiled, smooth-running piece of ma-

chinery which has just emerged from its chrysalis after centuries of tedious progress. In its previous form it was pretty much of an adventure, though by no means chaotic. The intelligence of the rank and file it attracts is higher. Hardiness and courage are about the same."

\* \* \*

"One of the really great differences between the old sailing days—by which I mean merely



1927—THE CUNARDER BERENGARIA



thirty or forty years ago—and the present is the fact that when men used to go to sea they were never certain what might happen, whereas now they know they are merely going from one port to another.

“Not only were many of the modern devices for safety unknown at that time, but they would have been of little help to sailing vessels even though science had evolved them then. Wireless for example—the most important of all these—is designed essentially for steamships which have the necessary power to operate it. Wireless is the voice which Marconi gave to the sea, enabling its more opulent wayfarers to converse freely with one another, to sound warnings of danger and to call aid in moments of stress. The sailing vessel, lacking the facilities to use it, is a speechless wanderer and fights its battles single-handed. When it falls into the trough of the sea and is dismayed or meets with other adversity, there is no friendly contrivance of science to work out its salvation.

“A rocket goes up into the night to attract the attention of

a passer-by, a flare burns, but it is a forlorn hope. The chief reliance of men then is their own courage and fortitude and their willingness to pull together in the common cause of saving the vessel and themselves.”

We believe our readers would be interested in the rest of Captain Rostron’s article, especially as it includes his account of his rescue of the *Titanic* survivors in the *Carpathia*, which he then commanded.

There is just one thing missing from his interview and that is his views on grapefruit!

#### “PLAIN” GEOMETRY

A prospective student was undergoing an oral test for classification in our Merchant Marine School.

“What do you know about triangles?” he was asked.

That proved to be too general a question, so it was narrowed down.

“What do you know about a hypotenuse?”

The answer came promptly.

“I don’t know anything, but I seen one in a circus once.”

## Help Jack to Write Home

The Institute Post Office and the Institute Writing Room shoulder a terrific responsibility. They very largely constitute the only tie that binds the sailor with anything permanent.

Through the Post Office, often the only address he has in the whole world, he gets letters from home (if he has one); and in the Writing Room he frames his reply, sometimes laboriously, sometimes with facile pen.

The Institute supplies the stationery. The fellow who fills more than one sheet is the exception. The more usual sailor correspondent settles himself for his task with both forearms on the table, his mouth awry to assist him in his effort to wield a noisy pen. The burden of this fellow’s message home is likely to be that he’s all right—he hasn’t written for a long time because he’s been on a trip around the world and he really had nothing to write about!

For some time the writing tables of necessity have been in the reading room and game

room, an arrangement which left much to be desired.

Our architect estimates that the reconstruction work incidental to providing a proper writing room, plus the cost of furnishing, will be \$5,000.

The need from the standpoint of Jack Tar is obvious. He must not only be permitted to write home, but we must encourage him to write home. Providing a comfortable convenient Writing Room between our Post Office and our Social Service Department will induce Jack to let the home folks know where he is whenever he puts up at the Institute; it will relieve many an anxious mother’s concern for her sailor son, and it will reduce the number of demands made upon us to locate missing men.

Friends of the sailor never fail to respond to our needs for further means of serving. This need will offer someone an opportunity to dedicate our Writing Room as a fitting memorial—someone, perhaps, to whom home ties have meant much.

*Who will give the \$5,000?*



## Jobs for Sailors

During 1926, 8842 seamen were placed in positions through the Institute's free Employment Department.

The cold fact itself is interesting, but it takes on added significance in the light of the explanation as to how this phase of our service to sailormen originated.

Dr. Mansfield started it to combat the old-time crimps and shipping masters who thrived on the nefarious practice of getting a sailor's wages in advance under pretext and then signing him onto a vessel to work off his "dead horse" on a long voyage.

Because of the Institute's activities in this as well as other directions, crimping and shanghaiing have largely disappeared from the New York waterfront, and the Employment Department has been able to very materially extend the scope of its service. It is now a licensed shipping office.

In charge of the department is a former sea captain who has had experience both under sail and steam, and who worked up from apprentice boy to ship's master. He has a thorough

knowledge of shipping conditions in the Port of New York, which, added to his understanding of seamen, results in his getting the square pegs into the square holes and the round pegs into the round holes, thus rendering a real service to ship owners as well as to our sailormen.

Most of the men now helped live at the Institute while in port, but the service is not limited to them. It is only necessary that the applicant be an active seaman with satisfactory discharge papers.

We have calls for all grades from galley boys to captains, and we are constantly finding temporary shore jobs for men just out of hospitals to tide them over until they are strong enough to go back to sea.

Placing men in jobs is, of course, essentially a relief measure. Our Employment and Social Service departments work in close cooperation and relief is never given to a man who is able to work.

Although our Employment Department is thoroughly business-like, it never forgets that

it is a part of the Institute and that the Institute has a heart. If, then, a homesick boy from San Francisco applies for work, we try to get him a job which will take him home, and we always find him most grateful.

And the Employment Department is not immune from the adventures of the sea. For instance, a man asks for a job that he can manage with a slight limp. Why does he limp? He was asleep on the deck of a

freighter one night down near the Panama Canal, and he fell overboard. His leg was badly bitten by a shark but he managed to swim ashore. Three days later he was picked up and taken to a hospital for six months. He shipped to New York but couldn't get a job because of his temporary impairment. We got him a berth where the limp wouldn't matter.

An employment department for seamen presents a number



OUTSIDE OUR EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT



of problems not encountered in other lines, especially when studied seriously.

The fundamental difference in the calling of the sea is that there are two distinct classes of men—the officers and the seamen. There is a distinct and abrupt dividing line, with no one on the fence. Everyone is on one side or the other.

To become an officer, a seaman must pass an examination in the theory and practice of navigation, also in first aid. It is seldom possible for him to get all the necessary theoretical training at sea. He must usually do a certain amount of concentrated studying ashore. While he must be an efficient seaman to become an officer, efficiency in itself is not sufficient. There is no gradual process of promotion because of prolonged faithful and skillful performance of duty as is the case in other professions.

A seaman, as a seaman, has almost nothing to work for. There is no superior who watches his progress who has the inclination and the power to reward him proportionately to his efforts.

It is this lack of a star by way

of a hitching post for his wagon that permits Jack Tar to shift from job to job. He knows he can get the same wages for similar work on another ship, regardless of his individual attainments. So if he doesn't happen to like his officers or if the cook's method of seasoning the food doesn't appeal to him, it is frequently his impulse to try another ship.

Our Employment Department tries to combat this tendency to drift in two ways. First, we always attempt to put the right man in the right job; and second, we encourage men who show the proper fundamental qualities to study for officership, sending them up to our own Merchant Marine School for full information as to how to go about it.

#### THE \$250 FOUNTAIN

Two drinking fountains in the New Building were offered as memorials in the July LOOKOUT, one at \$500 and the other at \$250. The \$500 one was immediately taken, but the other still remains for some friend of the sailor who wishes to make this contribution to his health and well-being.

## Our Portrait Gallery



Our Board Room, one time the cold meeting place of busy executives, is fast becoming one of the most historically interesting chambers of the Institute. Its walls, which heretofore have served only as partitions to insure the privacy of important conferences, have assumed the added significance of a photographic display of outstanding figures in the life of the Society.

Dr. Mansfield, wishing to rec-

ognize in some way the invaluable services rendered to this Society by the many men who have served as clerical vice-presidents and lay managers, and at the same time realizing that a pictorial record of this kind would be of unique historical interest, is endeavoring to procure photographs of those whose lives will be enduringly associated with the life of the Institute, since its foundation in



1843. This is not an easy undertaking, though he is meeting with surprising success.

There are now framed and hanging in their places the likenesses of 37 of the one hundred and fifty which he is determined to obtain, and others are being

### *The "Rough" Sailor*

It was an especially hot afternoon at the Institute. No one was stirring unless he really had to. Suddenly we were conscious of a familiar air floating up the stairway. It was being executed upon the old piano down in the sailors' reading room—one of the few recreations left since the overtaxing of our lodging facilities necessitated making dormitories of our game rooms.

The air was a charming rendition of Paderewski's Minuet. We followed it up, realizing as we approached that a bit more brawn was going into the bass than the composer intended, but still of the opinion that it was a charming rendition.

Then we came upon the scene. The old upright piano was in the middle of the room, its lid secured with a business-like padlock to prevent the use of its

located every day. Among the number are representatives of the clergy, lawyers, manufacturers, ship builders, bankers, brokers, and journalists, all men of prominence and distinction who found time to devote to interests other than their own.

interior as a waste basket.

A personable youth was performing. He was the picture of comfort, his shirt sleeves rolled well above his elbows disclosing elaborately tattooed arms. His straw hat was as far back on his head as might be, and a slightly consumed cigarette was perched behind his starboard ear. A roomful of drowsy seamen were drinking in the exquisite Minuet.

The picturesque pianist paused when he completed his selection. Leisurely he took his cigarette from behind his ear, lighted it, and proceeded with his music. His tattooed arms worked busily and he swayed rhythmically with his animated execution of "Yes-sir, that's my baby."

Versatile fellows, these sailors!

### *Vignettes of the Seaman*

Climate is one thing, and weather another. If a seaman's general climate seems to be all right we frequently make allowances for a temporary spell of bad weather.

This was the case with Captain Henry who found himself "on the beach" temporarily. He was a bit annoyed with himself and did his best to manage to get along; but finally after being without food for a day and a half, he decided to ask the Institute to make it possible for him to get home to Massachusetts.

Ordinarily we could not help out in such a case, but we made an exception of Captain Henry because his "climate" was so obviously of the right sort.

He justified our faith in him, for after a few days, we received a most appreciative letter enclosing a money order to cover the small loan we made him.

Mother Roper's "sons" are legion. She does not pretend to know them all by name, but she accepts each claimant so long as he is a sailor.

Who Ole Birnbaum is she cannot imagine. The important thing is that Ole Birnbaum knows Mother Roper and gave her name as his nearest relative when he enrolled in the U. S. Naval Training Station at San Diego, California.

Commander Harris Laning, quite unaware of the real situation, sent Mrs. Roper the following letter:

"It gives me great pleasure to inform you that your son has been chosen honor man of his company for the week ending July 19, 1927. This distinction is obtained only by earnest application to duty, and exceptionally good conduct, and means that your son stands highest in these respects in a company consisting of between ninety and a hundred men.

"Honor men are granted special privileges in order that others may be incited to emulate them.

"Permit me, therefore, to congratulate you on having a son who has attained this honor and to ask you to write to him, telling him to continue the progress he has made during the past



week of his training."

Needless to say, Ole Birnbaum has by this time received an appreciative and encouraging letter from his "next of kin," whose guidance means so much to sailormen the world over.

By a strange coincidence (although sailors' lives are so full of coincidents that Mother Roper does not consider them strange) a similar report of progress came from a "son" who has been improving his time in jail by taking a course in navigation.

When he received his certificate recently he sent it to Mother Roper so that she might see it for herself.

He explained his identity and his predicament in this way: "I am the fellow you loaned five dollars to, and when I paid it back, you said you were glad to see there was one honest man, but I couldn't make the judge believe that."

When this second evidence of successful study came to light, Mrs. Roper remarked, "Well, my children certainly are getting along with their education."

An emergency call came to

our Social Service Department. A seaman in a hospital on Staten Island wished to see a clergyman.

The seaman had a bad case of blood poisoning and his right arm was to be amputated on the morrow. It might cost his life. He was only twenty-five but he said he had lived a very evil life, and at this critical time he would like to be convinced of the reality of forgiveness.

Our chaplain talked with him until finally, at peace with himself, he asked to be baptized again, although he had been christened in infancy.

WILL ROGERS SPEAKS

Much has been said and is constantly being said in favor of an American merchant marine worthy of the achievements of this nation in other directions. Will Rogers comments thus:

"Lots of people don't know the difference between the two songs of America and England—'Columbia, Gem of the Ocean, and Rule Britannia, Britannia Rules the Waves.' Here is the difference. 'Britannia Rules the Waves' is a fact; 'Columbia, Gem of the Ocean' is just a song."

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

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

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

Would you like to have it sent to some friend?

THE LOOKOUT,

25 South Street, New York City.

Enclosed find one dollar for which please enter a year's subscription for

(Name) .....

(Address) .....

(Date) .....





## MISSING LINKS

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In endeavoring to get together a complete set of annual reports of the work of the Institute, we find there are a number missing and we should be ever so grateful if any of our readers could supply them. The years which we require are 1847, 1848, 1850, 1852, 1864, 1868 and 1869.

We should also like very much to get copies of the November, 1910, LOOKOUT.