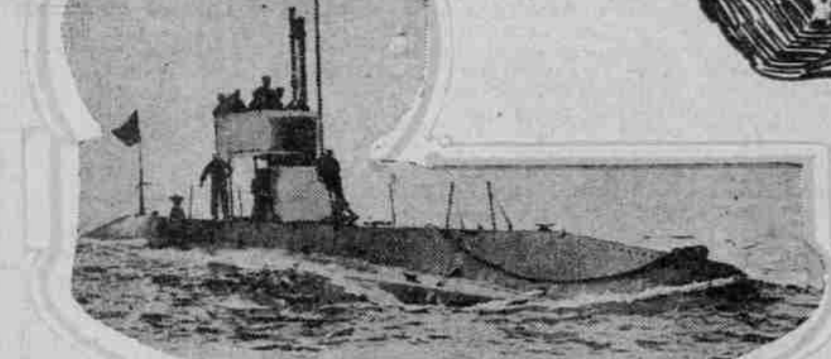
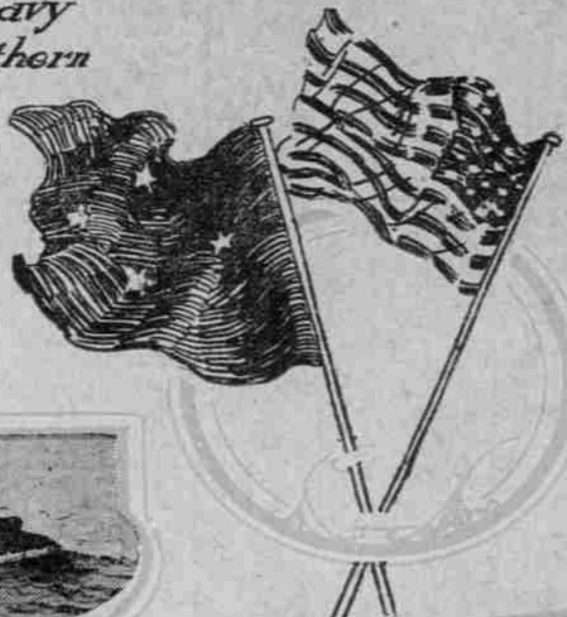


With Our Fleet in Mexican Waters

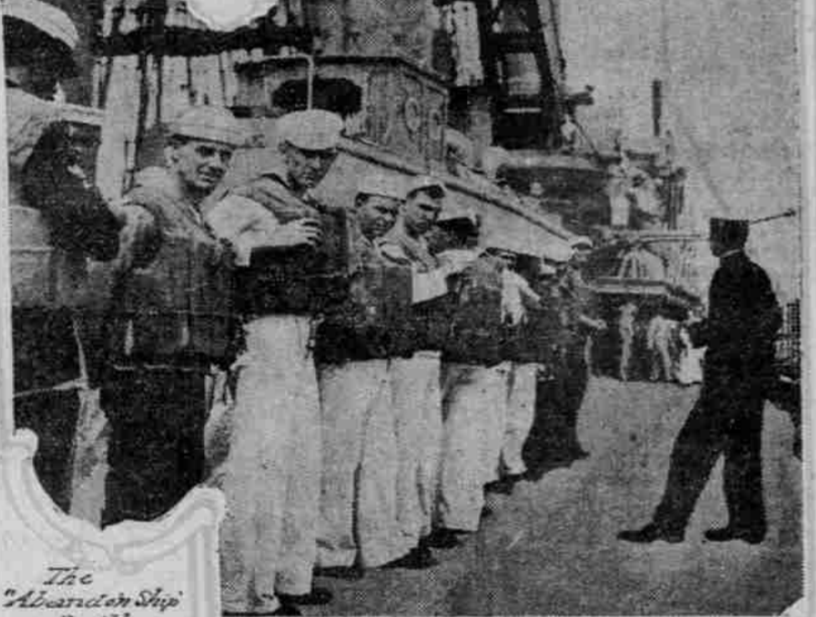
How the Fighting Men of the U. S. Navy Uphold the National Honor off Southern Shores.



The Submarine.



A Marine Encampment Ashore.



The Aboarder Ship Drill.

THREE weeks ago Uncle Sam picked up his best fighting men, fitted with the most complicated implements of destruction that it has been possible for the passing ages to devise, and hurled them sweepingly along the two coasts of Mexico. There they joined 7000 of their kind who were already on guard and equally prepared.

These men were aboard 18 big battleships, all floating fortresses with the power to unthinkably rend and tear at a distance up to 12 miles; on 14 battle cruisers with lighter guns and greater speed; on scores of destroyers fitted to drive home torpedoes that would demolish a city block with a single explosion. With them were 1800 marines ready for the landing and fighting that took place at Vera Cruz.

Altogether the Government of the United States demonstrated its ability to catapult at a moment's notice such a force as exists in but two or three places in the world. It was an army of fighting men that was valued at \$200,000,000 and aboard it was a force of able-bodied men equal to those that may be hoisted by a city of 100,000 people.

Navy Little Understood.

We of the ninety millions get little chance to become intimately acquainted with what happens aboard those \$12,000,000 monsters of the Navy that joll about Newport or Hampton Roads or Guantanamo Bay in their steel skins, 12 inches thick, plus a thousand-pound shell through a foot and a half of steel six miles away like we toss a toy to the baby, and carry this monster force to meet the enemy when an occasion like the present arises.

There are two reasons why we do not get well acquainted with them. The first is that they are out to sea where the walking is not good and consequently are rather inaccessible. The second is that the Navy does not want John Bull and the Kaiser and La Belle France and Napoleon and the rest of them to know just what stunts we have up our sleeve in case of war. If you and I and the rest of us were allowed to see, there would come among us a secret representative of a rival navy and we would lose our secret advantage. We used to be very careless about these things but the other nations were so clam-like that the United States finally got the habit and now she has more secrets than the whole lot of them.

But upon special occasions writing men are allowed to go aboard and abide a while as members of the officers' mess, to see many things that they may not write but, at the same time, absorb that general information that may be purveyed to the public. Such one may draw the picture of the life that is being led by our bluejackets and their officers along the Mexican coast.

He may draw the picture of a dozen great, gray dreadnaughts lying like vast saals asleep in the sun off Tampico and Vera Cruz. Like a dog he may hear his master, the captain, utter of torpedo-boat destroyers, watchful guardians of the big ships, dare-devils of the service and deadly demons of the fog and the darkness. Lying about in an occasional cove with its nose just above the water and its decks awash, is to be seen a representative of the submarine flotilla, those silent "hell-divers" that may creep beneath the biggest warship and drive home a rending torpedo.

How Ships Rank.

The cruiser is that ranks next to the battleship as a fighting craft. These cruisers are accustomed to holding down the lid in the Pacific for there is usually no battleship on the West Coast. They have the habit of hurrying marines from one port to another in the Caribbean where they are prone to revolute. They are the busiest ships in the Navy and the least frequently seen in home ports. But there are plenty of them now in Mexican waters ready for assignments that are important but do not require a dreadnaught.

The relative importance of the fighting ships may, however, be readily understood by their grouping in any such maneuver as the hurried trip to Mex-

ico. The big battleship is the center of all action. The business of the other ships is to convoy and protect her that she may be guided to her opportunity to demonstrate her claim to being the greatest fighting machine that the world has ever known. In action she takes the center of the column, the armored cruiser guards her to port and starboard, the destroyers shield her from attack. The lighter and swifter ships scout and maneuver and prepare for the titanic grapple which is ultimately to be left to those monsters of steel.

Military authorities have been trying of late to estimate the strength of a dreadnaught measured in fighting men. They have pretty well come to agree that one of these huge steel fighting machines, manned and equipped with the offensive and defensive marvels of this age of masterpieces of mechanism, is equal in strength to 50,000 soldiers. Upon this basis the strength of the United States in Mexican waters may be estimated. The 15 battleships alone would represent the strength of 750,000 men. The cruisers, the destroyers, the submarines would be estimated as doubling this strength. It would therefore seem that the United States had hurled against the shores of Mexico a force equal to a million and a half of soldiers.

Life Aboard a Warship.

To the landman there is a deal of interest in going aboard a big fighting ship for the first time, for the landlubber has the haziest sort of knowledge of the manner of things these ships are and the kind of lives that are led upon them. He knows vaguely that there are nearly a thousand men on one of these ships and he remembers that he has known many prosperous towns out West that had no more. His interest is large in the ways in which men live and, arriving in the dusk of evening, he studies the habits of those with whom he is thrown.

Such a visitor is assigned to the senator officer's mess. Dinner has already been served and he meets his messmates about the table in the ward room which is clubroom and dining hall for these officers. There are 20 men in the mess, the Commander, Lieutenant-Commanders, Lieutenants, Ensigns and midshipmen, the paymaster, the surgeon and assistant surgeon and, finally, the dashing captain of marines. All are Annapolis men but the paymaster, the surgeons and the captain are usually not aboard. They are the busiest men in the Navy and the least frequently seen in home ports. But there are plenty of them now in Mexican waters ready for assignments that are important but do not require a dreadnaught.

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is a bunk at one side with every inch beneath it utilized in convenient chests. There is a deep dresser that is also a writing desk, and there is a spacious clothespress. There is much room, considering the space, for packing things away but little chance for display. Uncle Sam provides this small room and these spare furnishings. The officer furnishes the bedding and even his own towels and soap. Surprised are you not? You probably supposed also that the Government provided its officers their uniforms. This is also a misapprehension. All those various gold-braided, broad-shouldered suits that must be so well tailored, are paid for by the officers themselves.

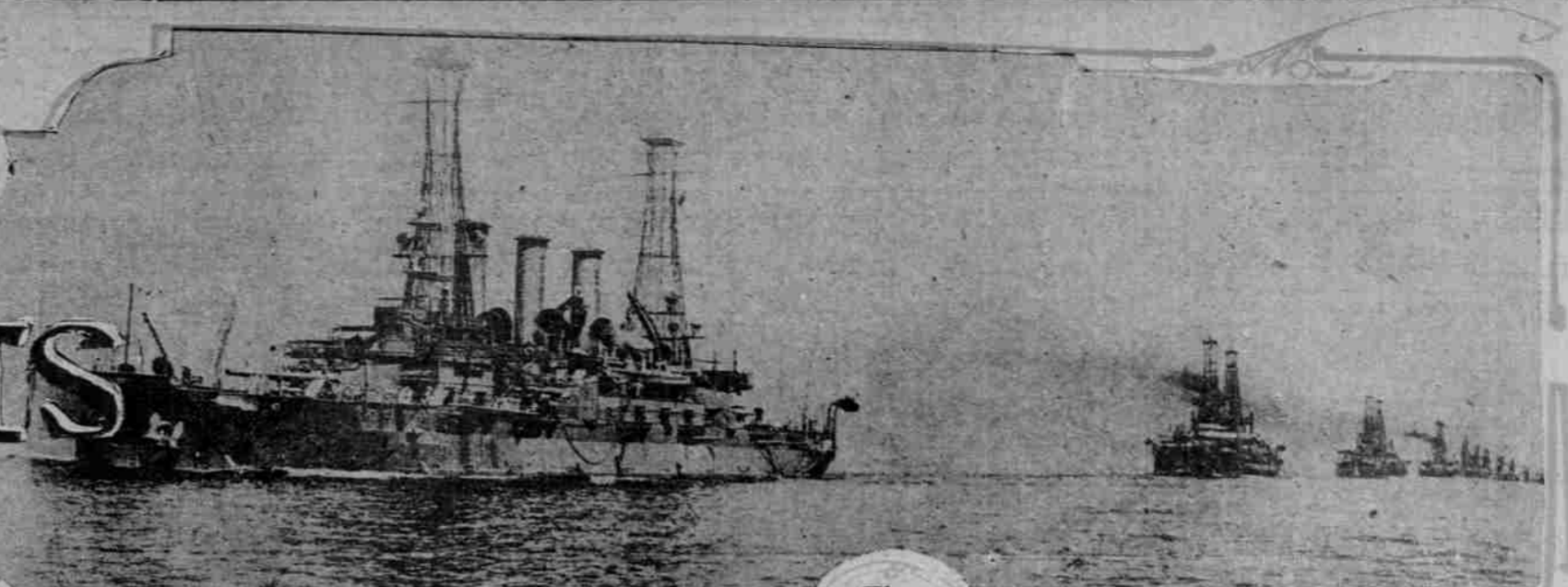
Pay of Officers.

But the food! Of course that is furnished by the Government when served aboard these ships of the Navy? Not so. The officers pay for every particle of food that is served in their mess. They club together, form a buying organization and stock the larder that is provided for their use. But the officers share equally in the expense. Enlisted men, often negroes or Filipino boys, serve the mess. Enlisted men do the cooking and the work of chambermen. But here the Government's expense ceases.

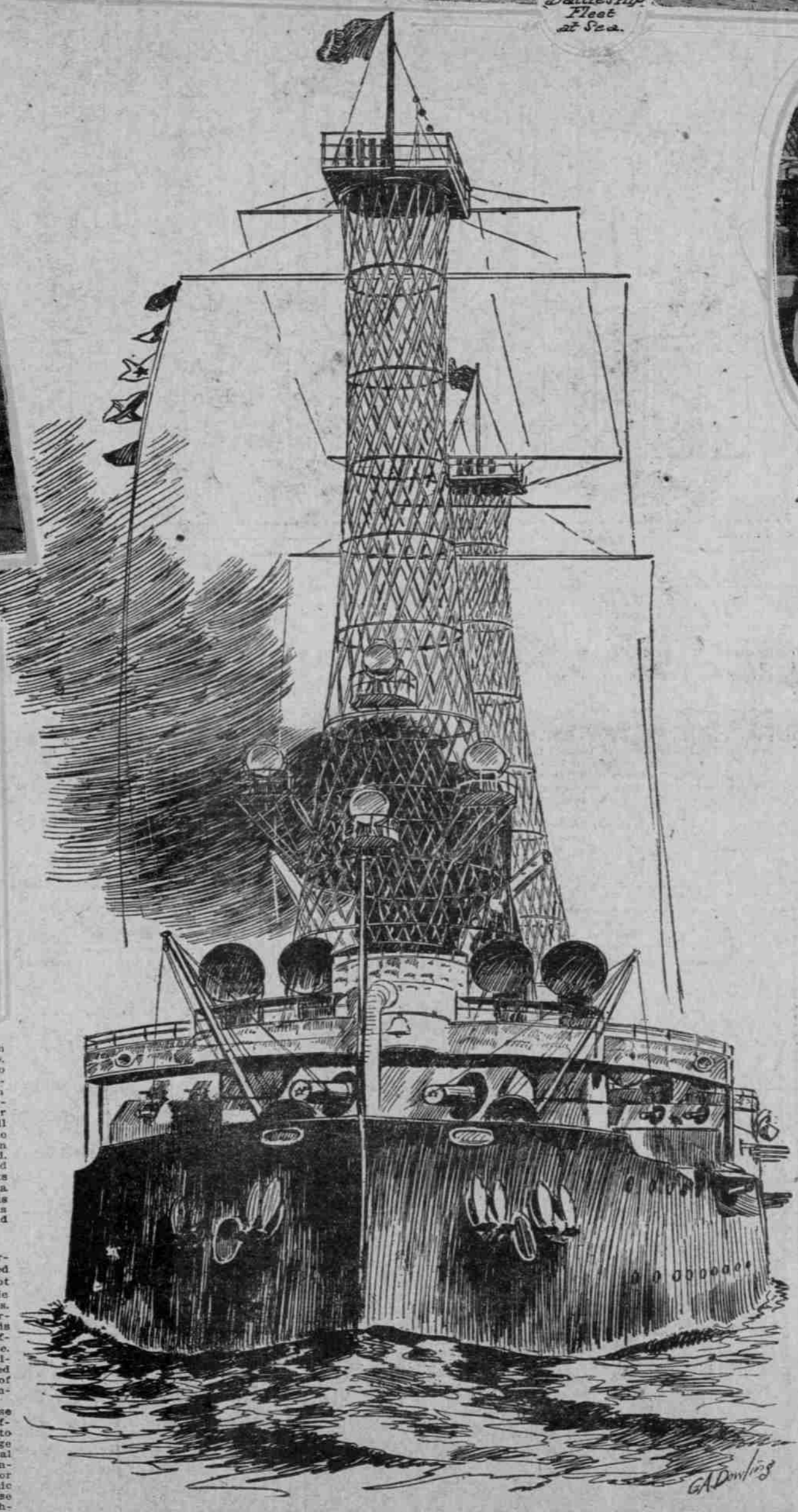
These expenses together with those of the enforced entertaining of the officers of the Navy cut pretty deep into their salaries which are not over-large and make no provision for exceptional ability. The order of Secretary Daniels with relation to the use of liquor in the officers' mess will be volcanic because of the money it will save those officers in entertainment, if for no other reason. The Captain of the ship gets a salary of but \$4500 a year; the Commander, \$3500; Lieutenant-Commanders, \$2800 and \$3000; Lieutenants, \$1800 to \$2600, and Ensigns, \$1200 and \$1400.

Most of these men marry as do other men and support separate families ashore. Some years they see these families for two weeks and some years conditions are such that they get home for longer periods. There are assignments of shore duty (with reduced pay) that are the bright spots in the Navy man's life.

But aboard ship these officers live like the gentlemen they are, despite the cramped quarters. The officers' mess is well provided and their intercourse is pleasant. They are all aboard in the big war game and the tascation of that constant strife for greater efficiency and for advancement of the service gets in the blood and little else matters. Personally the Navy officer is a bit formal in his courtesy because of his academy training. He affixes "sir" to the end of any speech made direct and he always calls even his associates of years "Mr." There is little of the familiarity of civilian intercourse and the more for-



The Battleship Fleet at Sea.



Peeling Potatoes by Machinery in the Navy.

1800 chops, 500 pounds roast beef, 60 gallons of gravy, 120 gallons of coffee or tea, 400 pounds potatoes, 200 lbs of vegetables, 4 gallons of baked beans, 148 gallons of chicken fricassee, 500 pounds of cabbage, 43 large plants of pudding, 18 lbs of fruit and about 650 pounds of chickens for roast.

These men get busy at an hour that is surprisingly early. To the landman who has been accustomed to a nap after 7 o'clock and who is not used to ship noises, there is due an interruption of his sleep along about 5:30 when the metal deck is being noisily scrubbed just overhead. The officers not on duty breakfast at 8 and ordinarily get their morning naps. Being accustomed to the noises a little thing like the clanging of an iron ventilator weighing 200 pounds against other metal of its kind and within six feet of the place of slumber, is no interruption.

By 8 o'clock there is not a particle of exposed surface about the decks that has not been scrubbed to spotlessness. There are some 400 petty deck officers and crew who perform this work. It is largely done in the first three hours of the day. The rest of their working time is devoted to drills including infantry drills, boat drills, drills looking to the mastery of the infinite system of signaling that must be understood by every other material for sport and amusement, signals, searchlight, and the infinite variety of flags meaning different things in different positions must be mastered.

Altogether there is a lot of time for work and play, for strenuous endeavor and for amusing relaxation. The men are mostly mere boys, ranging in age from 18 to 25 years. They are lusty and sport-loving and full of lowship. The officers of the battleships show a majority under 30 years of age and on the Delaware there were but three or four that had passed 40. In Navy administration the secret of the male of the species, the fact that man never grows up but likes the sports of youth to the end of the chapter, has been discovered. Games and amusements are arranged accordingly.

The amusement that is a regular diet in that entertainment of all the peccolans is the moving picture show. The profits from the canteen where trinkets, candies, tobacco and small articles are sold, are expended in purchasing material for sport and amusement.

The setting is unusual for this performance, especially in the phosphorescent Gulf of Mexico. The scene is put up on the main deck. There is only the night sky above and the great reaches of the ocean beyond the decks. The deck of the battleship is a vast arena. At one side are arranged chairs for the wardroom and these are the boxes for the officers. The enlisted men sprawl at ease in the parquet. Back of them are the turrets of the big guns rising some 10 feet above the decks. This is the gallery and the reservations here are popular. There is no restraint on the men and they very freely voice their likes or dislikes for the features of the show.

These are the routine details of the life aboard ship. There are the special occasions when the fleet maneuvers at Guantanamo or off the New England coast, or when target practice is on in the vicinity of Hampton Roads. Upon these occasions every big gun has a crew that has been training for years that it might win the honors from the crews of other ships. The crews are torpedoes to be launched with that wonderful mechanism within them that will cause them to travel five miles and find a target for which their gyroscopes were set. Or there are mines to be planted in the path of a possible enemy, or baseball games to be played on a shore.

Altogether it is a healthy and wholesome life that is led by the youngsters who go to make up the fleet, and altogether they are as select a lot of young huskies as can be found in any calling beneath the sun. To be sure they are but boys and a bit chattering at times. When the fleets of nations get together in some foreign port, for instance, it is known to be a bad policy to let the American and British sailors go ashore at the same time. Not that they would start trouble among themselves. Quite the contrary. It has been shown that the common language and common blood tells on those occasions for the Americans and the Britishers band together and insist on elbowing all other nations off the street. And this elbowing is sometimes resented and heads are consequently, 1800 buns, 5000 buckwheat cakes, gently broken.

cellent bed that is better fitted to sleeping in rough seas than any bunk. Those hammocks are swung so close together that scores of men are stowed away above the space that in daytime may be used for dining-room or almost any other purpose.

All hands are called from these sleeping places at 6 o'clock in the morning, for there is a vast amount of deck scrubbing and general cleaning to be done. The men tumble out to the sound of the bugle, dress, secure their hammocks and contents, and roll them into a neat cylinder for storage in the hammock nettings below. Nothing is left but the hooks as evidence that a hundred men have just been sleeping swung beneath a certain deck. Fifteen minutes is the maximum time allowed for this dressing and chambermaid work. The decks that were a few minutes previously hung with innumerable hammocks give no evidence of having ever been dormitories, and a landman might search all day for the sleeping quarters of the crew and get no inkling of their whereabouts.

In these same big rooms below deck the meals are served. Mysteriously, just before mealtime innumerable tables and benches appear and are set

out for the coming of the food. There is no small amount of this required, for 900 healthy boys living in the open and doing plenty of physical work all ways have an appetite somewhere about them. The crew's galley, where the food is prepared, is fitted with nine great cooking ranges, with 20 big copper coffee urns, holding 40 gallons each, and with great steam cookers in proportion.

There is no ceremony in the manner of eating in the bluejackets' mess. Each man is brought a great plate piled high with all the things that go to make up the given meal. Meat, beans, potatoes, rice, bread, all are on the one dish, making such a pyramid as would discourage the appetite of seven men of the swivel chair type. All this, however, is neatly tucked away by the Jack tar. Having disposed of which, he aesthetically withdraws his handkerchief from his sleeve, this being his only available place for carrying, and wipes his chops with satisfaction. The following report of the food prepared for a single meal aboard the Delaware will give an idea of the daily portion of 900 enlisted men.

"Two hundred pies, 21 large pans of cake, 1800 buns, 5000 buckwheat cakes, gently broken.