

CZAR OF HIS SHIP

The Captain of an Ocean Liner is a Real Autocrat.

HIS WORD IS ABSOLUTE LAW.

He May, if He Deems It Necessary, Put a Passenger in Irons or Clap Him in a Cell, and in Cases of Emergency Is Empowered to Take Life.

Imagine a mayor or a judge of a circuit court or a county sheriff or a town marshal of a village of 3,800 population stepping out into the street and unceremoniously imposing authority upon a citizen, ordering him to a cell and clapping irons on him for safe keeping?

Wouldn't the bird of American liberty set up a scream? Wouldn't the old and badly cracked Liberty bell resonate in discord?

After one of the great transatlantic passenger steamships leaves the three mile limit of New York the passenger is in foreign territory on the high seas. English, French, German—whatever the flag at the masthead—the ship is a section of its fatherland, floating in the high seas, where only maritime laws regarding its transit in times of peace may hold check upon the exorbitance of the ship's commander, on or off the bridge.

No czar has more power within his territory than has the captain of the great Atlantic liner on the high seas. He is on an island of his country's ownership—a floating island, having a population of 800 employees and looking after the welfare and safety of perhaps 3,000 passengers. He is practically the administrative, executive and judicial single individual, such as exists rarely on the map of present day civilization. Aside from his authority over mankind, he may have \$7,000,000 of vessel under him, to say nothing of the international mails and millions in gold in transshipment.

"There's the captain," is a whispered bit of comment made a million times a year in the beginning of the passages of great ocean steamships. And generally the captain looks the part.

It is not so much his uniform either. Ordinarily the captain is not young. There is gray in his hair, mustache or beard. That young man in his twenties, no matter what his schooling for beginning the work, isn't called at a moment's notice to the captain's bridge. He must have his maximum of training for six or seven numbers below before he is called to the foot of the ladder.

On the British passenger vessels most of the beginners at navigating an ocean vessel of the first class will have had a lieutenant's commission from the navy. It is from the royal navy reserves that the lowest officer's vacancy is filled. Filling it, he has his chance to rise to the position of captain.

As to the captain's authority: One midnight, when in a fog the White Star Baltic struck the German oil steamship Standard, the Baltic needed its captain, and he was there. His ship carpenters were rushed to the bow of the vessel and began the work of patching up the hole in the Baltic's steel sheathing.

Suppose that in a stampede of the Baltic's crew its employees had rushed up to fill its boats? It was within the captain's power to have shot down the leader—to have brought about war to the knife, revolver and rifle in the interests of his vessel and its passengers. Or had some passenger or passengers become panic stricken and against orders menaced the welfare of the majority on the ship death would have been dealt with the same rigid discipline which requires of the captain that he be the autocrat at his post.

There are no forms of writs or warrants necessary. There is no court at which the passenger or the seaman may give bond. In that instant of sudden great emergency which arises the captain's word is more than written law; it is the unwritten common law of the high seas, in the spirit of which the vigilance committee of the wild west of the United States rose, lawlessly lawful.

Today the captain of the great liner may step into the palatial cabin of command order. He may go into the smoking cabin and stop the game of cards at which the sharper is playing for his stakes. In case of rebellion that ancient land right of "no deprivation of liberty without due process of law" becomes a farce. The cell room or even the iron manacles of the captain's authority may be used upon the individual who has paid \$500 or \$1,000 for his suit of rooms and his passage. On the high seas the captain's ship becomes an autocratic democracy. The individual in the first cabin and at the captain's table must share with the innkeeper at far below those equities that are granted to each in his place.

"Don't buck the captain," said an official in the offices of a great steamship line. "He is all there is of authority."

He is the supreme entity of his ship. He is dressed for it; but, more than that, he is trained to it. He is empowered to take life if he must, and on land this is the most serious of all things in the statute books.

"Commodore of the fleet" is one of the offices toward which the old sea captain looks, not enviously, not with disdain. It is a naval number in the passenger service which marks the age of retirement. There is honor in the title. It does not descend to his children. He gives half his life to the gaining of it, and it means that his activities and powers are at an end.—Chicago Tribune.

VENETIAN WOMEN.

The Whims of Fashion Hold No Terrors For Them.

The women of Venice are absolutely free from the rule which Dame Fashion exercises over their sisters elsewhere. They care nothing for modes. With them the length of the skirt remains always the same, neither short nor long, and they always wear plainly made dark dresses, black stockings and the heeless slippers of the east. Hats are unknown.

The universal outdoor wrap for all ages and all sizes is the black shawl, with a deep silken fringe. It is folded with a short point above and a long one below, and sometimes it envelops the figure from head to foot. It is never fastened at the throat, and when it slips off it is gathered up with one outstretched arm, which makes the spectator think of a big bird stretching its wing.

In their attire the women of Venice are independent, only wearing local clothing, but with feminine inconsistency they are thoroughly up to date in the matter of hairdressing, the style of their collures changing from time to time, according to the vogue of the moment in London and Paris.

Identified.

William M. Chase, the artist, was a picturesque figure, dressing in clothes that had a certain originality, though they conformed more or less to the prevailing fashions. On one occasion Chase on his way home stepped into a little wine shop and ordered a jug of claret of a special brand sent to his house. The lad who brought it came to the front door an hour afterward, when the artist had already arrived. "Some wine," he said curtly. The maid, knowing there was yet plenty in the cellar and believing the lad had made a mistake, said she was sure it was not for that house and did the boy remember the name of the man who ordered it. The boy didn't. "Then," said the servant, "you've come to the wrong place; we never ordered wine." At this moment the boy spied Chase's famous hat on the hall table. "Say," he asked, "does that hat live here?" "Yes," said the amused maid. "Then," said the boy triumphantly, "here's where the wine belongs!"—Argonaut.

Not For Fashion's Sake.

The criminal law of England was formerly marked by indiscriminating severity. Theft of an article valued above 10 shillings was punished with death. In writing about "Sweet Hampstead and Its Associations" Mrs. White records a pleasant thing of Lord Mansfield, who, as a rule, leaned to the side of mercy. It was Lord Mansfield who directed a jury to find a stolen trinket, less in value than 10

shillings in order that the thief might escape capital punishment. To this the jeweler who prosecuted demurred, asserting that the fashion of the thing had cost him twice that money. "Gentlemen," replied the judge, with grave solemnity, "we ourselves stand in need of mercy. Let us not hang a man for the fashion's sake!"

MacMahon's Epigram.

When Marshal MacMahon in the Crimean campaign took the Malakoff by storm and wrote his celebrated dispatch, "J'y suis; j'y reste" ("Here I am; here I stay"), these words made him famous all over the world. Yet his friends said that the worthy soldier had written them in the most matter of fact manner, with no thought of phrase making. The most surprised person over the success of this epigram was MacMahon himself.

Helping Her Out.

"Have you a young chicken? I am rather green at cooking." "Such being the case, madam, don't you think you'd better have an old, experienced fowl?"—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Wife (on returning home after a long visit)—Have you noticed that my husband missed me much while I was away. Mary? Maid—Well, mum, I didn't notice that he felt your absence much at first, but this last day or two he has certainly seemed very down-hearted, mum.

Good-bye, Profits!

Next Christmas is a long way off, and we don't want to carry our left-over Novelties until then; so we'll give them to you for one-third off, in exchange for cash to put in our Spring stock. They'll come handy when you want to give a birthday gift, and no one will be the wiser that you have saved the jeweler's profit on them. And some of these things are so cute that you will want to make a gift to yourself.

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Cured When Very Low With Pneumonia.
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