

GUARDIAN OF SHIPPING

How Travel on the Seas is Being Made Safer

GIVING SIGHT TO THE BLIND

Important developments in wireless direction finding—the means by which a ship can be told from the land its exact position at sea—are expected as a result of experiments carried out by Marconi, during his recent cruise in the Elettra.

Navigation in stormy and foggy weather is already being made very much safer by the use of this method.

An example of this was given quite recently when a Spanish liner, battling furiously against a storm just off a treacherous coast, was unable to find her bearings owing to the sun being obscured.

At any moment the ship may have been dashed to destruction on hidden rocks, but the captain thought of his wireless, and, getting into communication with the shore, his exact position was wirelessed to him, and he was able to steer clear of danger.

Lost in Mid-Atlantic

Again, there was recently a terrific hurricane raging off the North Atlantic coast, when, from a variety of causes, a great number of ships became uncertain of their bearings. They communicated with the shore, and each boat had its correct position sent from the New York wireless direction-finding station.

Besides gales, dense fogs very often prevail at the mouths of the great American rivers, navigation becoming exceptionally hazardous, and collisions of frequent occurrence. Wireless direction-finding will eliminate this danger—it is like giving back sight to a blinded man—and special stations for sending information to ships are to be erected at many points on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of North America; three such stations are now in course of erection at the mouth of the Mississippi for shipping going to New Orleans.

Wireless direction finding can also be used in connection with aircraft in fogs.

Several of the air expresses between London and the Continent are fitted with wireless, and by the use of direction-finding they are able to make the Channel crossing safely in fogs which only a few months ago would have made the journey extremely hazardous, if not impossible.

MAKING THE VILLAGE INTERESTING

A Good Thing from War-Time

During the war the Board of Agriculture was busy promoting the formation of women's institutes in the villages. Now it is relinquishing the work into the hands of the National Federation of Women's Institutes, which represents 1600 centres. It is one of the good things war-time left behind.

In its farewell reference to this movement the Board claims that the institutes have shown that life in a village can be made as attractive and interesting as the life of a busy town.

The Institute encourages every member to give of her best. The successful jam-maker discloses her secret recipe; the best bread-maker demonstrates the reason for the lightness of her loaves; the expert bee-keeper gives a practical talk on the wonders of the hive; the student reveals the treasures of local history. The Institute promotes a higher cultivation of field and garden; it gives instruction in pig, goat, and rabbit-keeping, cheese-making, fruit bottling, and in toy, hat, and basket-making, in glove-making, chair-caning, co-operative marketing, and egg-collection; and it has developed in many important ways the recreative side of village social life.

AT SCHOOL WHERE THE WIND BLOWS

Some of us who are middling old are getting envious. We envy the lucky boys who are beginning to be educated in the open air, and taught the natural joys of life mixed with other lessons.

Take, for example, the class of 25 boys from the Rhyll Street School, St. Pancras, who spent last summer on Hampstead Heath—Windyheath boys, as they are called.

The master-in-charge, Mr. Charles S. Green, the right kind of man to make men, sends us a note of their doings—what they see on the heath, what they learn, and what they enjoy, while one boy grew as much as three-and-a-half inches, and all their chests expanded.

It was an education calculated to grow men—healthy, observant, self-dependent, loyal to each other. Look at the rules of the open-air class.

Mr. Green has chosen for the school motto those words of our gipsy poet, Borrow, spoken to console a blind brother:

Life is sweet, brother.
There's day and night, brother—both sweet things;

Sun, moon, and stars—all sweet things;
There's likewise the wind on the heath.

Here are the splendid rules of life for the Windyheath boys.

A Windyheath boy is an outdoor boy.

I will go out-of-doors in all weathers.

I will leave the streets and go to the fields.

I will bathe whenever I can, and learn to swim as soon as I can.

I will wash my body daily with cold water.

I will clean my teeth.

I will sleep with open windows, and lengthen my life.

I will learn all I can from the lives of plants and animals.

I will write or draw some of the things that interest me.

I will open my eyes to the sky.

I will open my ears to the song of the wind.

I will open my heart to my friend.

I will share all good things with others.

Well might any boy or any girl, on the heath or off, in the country or in town, live up to rules like these.

You can tell a Windyheath boy by the star on his cap, says Mr. Green. It means "Look Up."

Yes, let us look up. It is a great gospel, with the re-making of the world in it.



The Windyheath Boys at the Open Air School on Hampstead Heath

MISTER SHAKESPER

Kinema English in Turkey

The Turks are a race of philosophers, who make the best of a bad thing when they feel it must be. Just now they know the Allies are masters of Constantinople, and to them the Allies mean, first of all, the English. So they accept things as they find them, and are quite pleasant with that genial friend of all the world, Tommy Atkins. Indeed, they are catering for his amusement with a good grace. They even try their best to use his language.

Here is an announcement, for his benefit, outside one of their kinema shows in Constantinople.

HAS YUE
LIKE IT
FEATURE
MISTER
SHAKESPER
ENGLISH SPOKE

So the Turk announces the film of "As You Like It." It is very odd, but, after all, it is not much worse than some of the English we have seen on the films that are shown at home.

AGE WILL TELL

The Dear Old Universities

One of the infirmities of age is that its movements are slow. That is truer of institutions than of men. The oldest institutions in this country are the kingship, the church, Parliament, and the universities, and all except the kingship, which is human and wideawake today, are very slow.

The church only makes up its mind and moves on any question long after the nation knows what should be done; Parliament bristles with obstructive tricks for being slow; and the universities, which are supposed to represent the nation's intelligence, crawl painfully in the rear of public opinion.

Take the treatment of men and women as equal by the old universities, which have only just found out the truth well understood and accepted by the new universities. Having at last found it out, Oxford only knows how to admit it. Cambridge acknowledges the fact, but needs a deal more time to arrange how it can possibly treat men and women students alike. They come round to what everybody knows at last, those dear old universities, but slowly, very slowly, after much talk, while the world moves on and leaves them well behind.

NONSENSE ABOUT THE FLY

WHAT IT DOES IN WINTER

And Where Many Thousands of Them Go in Summer

SURPRISING CENSUS OF A WASP'S NEST

The absurd question, "Where do flies go in winter?" is travelling wide, and fantastic theories are being put forward in answer to it. One grave journal now asks us to believe that the world depends for its supply of these insects upon the few which survive and hibernate, and that if in a single winter we could kill those survivors, we should enter the next year upon a flyless land.

What abject nonsense it all is! Moths, butterflies, greenflies, crane-flies, and the rest—where do they go in winter? Do a few of these linger on, exposed to a million hazards, each year's teeming broods depending upon the chance survival of a few during fatal frost and annihilating wind? Nature is not so foolish as some men who discuss her. She leaves nothing to a chance like that.

This year's moths and butterflies spent last winter in the sleep of the chrysalis stage. This year's flies were grubs of arrested growth or pupae in stable refuse heaps.

Life Story of the Fly

Nearly all flies die before or during winter. A few hibernate, as a few butterflies do, but for the most part they, and the flies and other short-lived insects, are like flowers. They rise and flourish for their season, and provide for the coming year swarms of eggs. Seeds rest in the winter and germinate in spring; insect eggs hatch and produce grubs, which turn into chrysalises, or pupae, and in that stage pass the winter. There is absolutely no mystery at all about the subject.

A much more interesting question is asked and answered by a writer in Nature. Where do many flies go in summer? he asks, and tells us: Down the wasps' nests as food for the grubs. Wasps kill an enormous number of flies of all kinds, he points out. He took a sort of census at one small nest, and found that its wasps brought home at least 2000 flies a day. A strong nest of wasps would destroy 20,000.

Wasp's Good and Bad Points

That is a plea in favour of the wasp's continued existence, but if we were as cleanly in our habits at home as we compel natives to be in malarial districts, we should not need wasps as fly-hunters.

Still, wasps are not so vicious as popular imagination deems them to be; they are not nearly so black as they are painted. Leave the wasp alone and he will leave you alone. And as to his industry and intelligence we can surely rely on the opinions expressed by such authorities as Reaumur and Lubbock, who both declared the wasp to be superior to the bee in these respects.

Of course, in fruit-growing districts the wasp does untold harm unless kept severely in check, and big fruit-growers actually keep men whose work it is to find the wasp nests and destroy them.

The wasp is also addicted to raids on the bee-hives. Even so, however, the wasp is not entirely harmful, and its entire extinction would probably result in a plague of pestilent flies.

CHUMS

A Glasgow reader sends us a Canadian paper which reports the friendship of a goldfish, canary, and cat.

When Mrs. Smith feeds the cat it saves a few crumbs for the bird, which hops to the top of the goldfish bowl and gives a few to the fish.