Travel.

YARNS OF A SHIP'S SURGEON. THE "WASP" AGAIN.

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(Continued from p. 388.)

First impressions on going to the Far East are that the Straits of Malacca constitute a sort of half-way house between the Near and Far East.

At Penang one sees a large number of Indians, though the Chinese easily predominate. At Port Swettenham the number of Indians is proportionately less. Whilst at Singapore it is less again.

Then Hong Kong and Shanghai are wholly Chinese, I mean except for Europeans, Indians, and Japanese, who really constitute only a sprinkling in proportion to the teeming native population.

Another "first impression" is that, broadly speaking, the language difficulty constitutes almost an insuperable barrier between the West and Near East on one side, and the Far East on the other. One is accustomed at Continental ports, Mediterranean ports, and when travelling in India, etc., to have little or no difficulty over language. But once past the half-way house of Malacca, I found the change and inconvenience very great. The majority of the various dealers and touts who came on board ship have only a few words of very imperfectly pronounced English; and "conversation" with them is generally purely monosyllabic and very limited. Pocket-dictionaries, and useful phrases phonetically spelt, which often can be such a help elsewhere, are no use in China and Japan.

Even those who can converse a little are usually confined to their particular "line" of articles, or business. For instance, a Japanese dealer may be able to give you quite intelligent information about his laquer goods, but ask him "where does this street lead to" and he is bowled over at once. He simply doesn't understand, no more than if you spoke double Dutch to him. I have had several experiences of this sort.

Things of course are all right in the European shops; but if only for sentimental reasons one often prefers to buy, especially curios, in the native shops; there the language difficulty is generally a great nuisance. After all it is only natural there should be this difficulty, as a chasm broad and deep separates the languages of the Far East from the Indo-European group, known as the "Aryan" family." The difficulty between these two great groups is over inflection.

In the Chinese group words are incapable of inflection, and each word or sound represents an idea in itself, and it is by an agglutination of
individual words that composite ideas are represented. Whereas inflection is the great characteristic of the Aryan group, and so anyone in this group can with comparative ease learn the language of another of the group. For example, an Indian could learn French in a fraction of the time he would take to learn Chinese.

By the way, that wayward scholar and traveller, Major E. B. Soane, who died recently, has shown the Kurdish language to be a distinct language, and not merely a dialect of Persian, as it has hitherto been considered. Unfortunately the dictionary of the language which he had been working on had not been completed before he died.

I believe it is the “correct thing” to describe the Chinese as liars, lazy, dirty, and dishonest. My brief visit did not suggest any of these. In the river life, notwithstanding the overcrowding, I always noticed comparative cleanliness. Everybody from the infant up seemed to have his job and to follow it assiduously. Even the youth who slept as he fished would have promptly jumped up if he got a bite.

On the contrary, a cursory visit leaves pleasant impressions. Their open, good-natured, always smiling faces are pleasing; and especially pleasing is the soft modulating tone of the voice, so naturally musical and gentle. They seem never to get ruffled or lose their tempers.

Out East when in dock it is customary to have all sorts of people come knocking at your cabin door. One wants to mend your boots; another to sew on buttons, and so on. One day when I was busy I was worried by callers one after another, until at length, in pretty stiff language, I told one of them to clear out. He beamed on me with a broad smile and said, “Ali—good byee.” They often say this. Of course such a remark in such circumstances, and made by a person who knew the difference, would be cheeky sarcasm. But not so with them; it is their idea of comme il faut, and is made with the best intention, and is really amusing. In this particular incident I was so amused I called him back and bought some cuff-links from him.

Not being on the Stock Exchange, nor a gold expert I cannot say why gold should be cheaper and more plentiful in China than elsewhere. I thought currency always balanced itself between different countries. But the fact remains, gold is cheaper and more on tap in China than elsewhere: at least I found it so.

The Chinese appear to suffer a good deal from dental decay; and where you and I would be satisfied with a little cement filling, the Chinese coolie prefers gold.

I think I am not exaggerating when I say fully fifty per cent of the coolies working on the ship, when they beam on you—and they are always beaming—display a mouth stuffed with gold. It is quite remarkable the numbers of very poor one sees with gold fillings.

Various kinds of cheap jewellery and ornamental work, a sort of cloisonné, are inlaid with gold, and it is nearly always eighteen carat.
I bought a pair of gold links for (the equivalent of) about 26s. I had them recently valued, and the jeweller said they were eighteen carat, and worth about £3.

I may mention most of my purchases were made from native shops and dealers in Shanghai and Japan.

I believe everything one could wish for can be got at Hong Kong; but I was informed the prices there are somewhat stiffer. Likewise everything can be got at Calcutta, but prices there are much higher—at least judging by one experience I had. Thus, at Yokohama I bought two vases of "Satsuma ware," for which I paid the equivalent of about 30 shillings for the pair. Later on when passing a shop in Calcutta I saw two Satsuma vases in the window which were identical in size and in every way to the ones I had bought; so through curiosity I went in and inquired the price. I was told Rs. 51. That is nearly £3 10s.

I made a point of getting some silk in China, and not Japan—I did this because I was told the Chinese silk is made altogether on hand-looms, and so is better in quality, and more lasting than that made in Japan, which is machine-made.

After leaving Shanghai and having escaped the typhoon, we arrived in due course at Moji, the first port in Japan. The place is a coaling station pure and simple, and no more than a village.

My first experience of the Japs was with the port medical officer, and I must say I was not too favourably impressed. He could speak English only very imperfectly, was dirtily dressed, and when I offered him a cigarette both he and his two assistants put their hands in the tin and each pulled out a handful.

The Japs are not now in favour as they were when they were beating the Russians. I must say, however, I found them always very obliging, courteous and pleasant; as for instance, my experience with the doctor and his assistants, which does not support any allegation of uppishness. When you offer a cigarette to an uppish or "sidy" person, he refuses, or perhaps condescends to take just one—never a handful. I only wish they had been uppish on that occasion!

Indeed, it seems to me almost impossible to imagine uppishness or swelled headiness going hand in hand with the graceful and pleasing curtsy they so frequently and on the slightest pretext make. All classes equally make this bow, and the sincerity and gracefulfulness of it is very taking.

If you have been through the Inland Sea of Japan I really think you need not bother to see any other of the world's "beauty spots," as this is of such surpassing beauty. It is, roughly speaking, about 180 miles long, and the whole distance is one continuous chain and endless variety of every delightful scenic effect imaginable. We saw it at its very best, bathed in calm and sunshine—but I am told it is possible to go through and see nothing owing to mist and haze, and that this occurs fairly frequently.
When we arrived at Kobe we found we had just missed a typhoon there. After discharging some cargo, we weighed anchor and set sail for Yokohama. When about seventy miles from Kobe one of the quarter-masters called attention to a speck in the water.

At sea it is, of course, very difficult to "spot" and find out what a small floating object is. It disappears in the hollow of a wave or swell, and when you see it again, before you have time to get your glasses properly on it, it is gone, and so on. But from occasional glimpses caught, some thought it was a man, so the ship was hove up and a boat put off. And sure enough, there was a Japanese man on a piece of wood, straddle-legged across it, and lying on his stomach, so weak that he could only move his head, and could not raise himself up. After some manoeuvring to avoid injuring him, he was got into the boat with difficulty.

By the time he was on the ship he was "as good as dead," as the unavoidable pulling and hauling he had just been through seemed to be about the last straw. So time did not permit of much more handling, and as the deck was hot and sunny he was wrapped in blankets and hot bottles were applied.

One naturally took a special interest in such a case, so it was anxious work watching him, as he showed no signs of reviving. He seemed to be completely numbed and in a sort of "cerebral" condition, with slow, shallow breathing and no pulse. But he was a young man, and his powerful physique stood to him, and after some hours he showed signs of life, and from that on improved steadily, so that he was nearly quite recovered by the time we got to Yokohama. Of course he could not speak a word of English, so we had to wait until we got to port to hear his story. He was one Kowaowka Yousabero, a "hand" on board a small coastal trading ship, having a crew of five, including the captain-owner. There were also two passengers on board—a young married couple, who had only just been married. They got the full force of the typhoon, and one wave which struck the ship not only capsized her but broke her to matchwood. He never saw any of the crew or passengers again. He said he thought the log he was on was a piece of the ship's keel.

About a mile in front of us, also going to Yokohama, was a large Japanese steamer which Kowaowka said had nearly passed over him, but nobody on board saw him; and as we were not in her wake, but a good bit further off, he said he had given up all hope, as he had been over twenty-four hours in the water and had got a fearful buffeting from the waves for more than twelve hours (the sea had gone down a good deal when we rescued him). Besides night was coming on.

Some days after when at lunch I was told the Japanese sailor was outside my cabin and wanted to see me; on going out, there I found Kowaowka arranged in a beautifully striped kimono, held at the waist by a summerbund of bright yellow and azure blue. He looked such a "nut" I hardly knew him. He had a basket in his hand containing two dozen of
beer which he gave me—an interpreter at the same time making a suitable speech, during which Kowaowka repeatedly curtsied in the charming Japanese fashion. Of course I thanked him, but I did not tell him that it was not to me but to the crew who rescued him that he should have made the present. I duly passed the beer on to the crew of the boat.

On arrival at Yokohama we found we had just missed a fearful typhoon. This was really the worst of all, as no less than six ships of over 4,000 tons had gone down in it, besides smaller craft of all sorts.

In the American colony there was great anxiety over a ship of theirs which became much overdue—however she turned up all right after some days, having experienced the full force of the typhoon. When she arrived she had, I believe, only about a pint of oil fuel remaining in her tanks. I never quite understood what she was; but I gathered she was on some sort of a “commercial mission.” She had commercial “big wigs” on board; but what seemed curious was, she was “run” by naval officers. She was a fine-looking ship, painted all white, and rather of a semi-yacht, semi-warship design. She reminded me somewhat of the Kaiser’s yacht the “Hohenzollern.”

On leaving Yokohama we wormed our way along, dodging the typhoons, until once again we fetched up at Hong Kong. Here I found a note awaiting me from Major P. S. Tomlinson of the Corps. The latter asked me up, not only to tennis, but also to lunch and dinner. Such kindness I thought,
as I had never met him before, except just casually when we called at Hong Kong on the way out. As our ship was over at Kowloon I had rather a long way to go. First I crossed to Hong Kong in a boat—I could have gone by a ferry steamer, but the boat was more convenient and nearly as cheap. Arrived at the quay, I jumped into a rickshaw and told the man to drive to the top of the rock; then I would direct him further. Broadly smiling he replied with confidence, "Yau, me understand," and off we buzzed. After rattling along for some time, I began to get familiar with the streets, and soon realized we were simply doubling in and out from one street to another.

I have already referred to the language difficulty in the Far East, and it is on an occasion like this it can be brought home to one. The heat was of course then very great, and any Europeans about were in rickshaws or other conveyance. And one could not well stop a man flying by in a motor, merely to ask him the way. So that it is possible, under such conditions, to potter about for a considerable distance without being able to get information. Policemen are no use; as a rule the only English they know is "yau"—perhaps Hong Kong is somewhat an exception, as there Sikhs are employed as policemen. But then how many visitors can speak Hindustani? Fortunately I know enough of the language to carry on with, and so I pulled up opposite a splendid specimen of a Sikh with curling beard. He then told me the rickshaw walla could not take me up to the aerial railway, let alone the top of the hill; I would have to go to the railway in a "dandy," or walk to it; and that the railway was very near. Very near! yes, only just 200 feet above me! How I did perspire climbing those 200 feet!

This mountain railway is a splendid institution. I do not know whether it is owned by the Government or a private company, but it ought to pay well judging by the crowds which patronize it. Anyway it shot us up 1,305 feet to the Peak in double quick time, where we breathed the cool, rare and refreshing mountain air—at least it seemed so by comparison with the heat below. Whether going up or down, you always sit facing upwards in the carriage; in parts, the ascent is so perpendicular, we were lying on our backs against the back of the seats, with our feet sticking up high in the air. The lady passengers did not seem to resent the attitude as undignified—indeed it would be little use for them to do so, as owing to the position they were in they were practically powerless to move, let alone get out and walk.

Arrived at the Peak (it is only "peak" in name, as the real peak of the rock is more than 400 feet higher up), I was sporting enough to entrust myself once again to a rickshaw-walla. I had heard that the fellows up in the cool air of the Peak had cooler and more intelligent heads, and actually knew the numbers of the bungalows. So I told him to peg off as hard as he could to bungalow No. 66, as I had lost a good bit of time already owing to my little escapade below. But it was only natural I should be dis-
trustful, and I watched with anxiety as he ascended by devious paths. However, he brought me to the bungalow all right—a charming one picturesquely situated on a spur of the Rock, and commanding a delightful view.

Though I was a little late I found T. had not yet returned—he had telephoned up he was detained at the hospital: If I remember rightly, it was over a case of a man who had fallen down a khud or out of a window and was badly injured. But in due course he arrived, and after an excellent lunch we were sitting on the verandah smoking and sipping coffee and looking down on the truly enchanting scenery which lay beneath us extending away in varied and apparently limitless panorama. I had just relighted my cigar—though perhaps I should not admit this, as I believe connoisseurs do not relight cigars; but it was such a good one I seemed to do it automatically—when some friends they had asked up to tennis were announced, and in they came in full fighting kit—jumpers and cardigans on arm, rackets in hand.

As a result of experience, one instinctively becomes a little suspicious about private courts; but any uneasiness I may have felt on this score was soon dispelled. The court was in top-hole condition, and we had really a grand afternoon of it. Both “mixed” sets and men’s doubles.

Then came dinner—and here I am afraid I rather “gave myself away,” as I ate all that was put before me, and even so far forgot myself as to ask for a second help of a particularly delicious dish. It is such bad form you know nowadays to eat a square meal!

I did not get back to the ship until late that night—the end of a perfect day.

Between Japan and Hong Kong we had shipped a good deal of valuable cargo in the form of silk and tea; silk is especially valuable as the freightage on it is very high. We had also a good number of passengers on board, though we were not full as it was the “hot season”—still the fair sex was well represented.

I do not know whether it may be due to the iodine in the air, or perhaps the ozone; but why is it that life on board ship has such a demurring and self-effacing tendency on the fair sex? Even girls who have hitherto been noted “tomboys” seem to become reserved and shy as soon as they set foot on board. But indeed this tendency to reserve and self-effacement has recently sprung up, and is now noticeable amongst the sex on land as well as at sea; and unless we men take timely steps to counter it, we will, perhaps, before we know where we are, find ourselves back in the “fifties,” so to speak, and surrounded once again by “mid-Victorian” women. It is quite alarming the way women are now shrinking from publicity and notoriety in any form.

Only recently a lady friend of mine, surfeited with the “turkey trots,” “bunny hugs,” and bridge-parties of Mayfair, decided to break away from her life of gaiety and pleasure, and henceforward to devote herself to
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altruism and self-effacement. And to do this she decided to become a trainer and stable-boy.

In selecting this life her idea was, that so few of her sex become stable-boys there would be no difficulty in ensuring self-effacement; and she argued that her spurs, stowazers, riding-breeches and jockey cap would materially help in completing the disguise. But the wily editors of the Society journals got to hear of her soon enough, with the result that the interviewers and camera men rolled up at the stable en masse one day, and the poor girl was quickly surrounded. In order to get rid of her tormentors she allowed herself to be freely "interviewed." She even allowed them to take photographs of her.

First she was photographed just as she had come from the stable—and I must say she looked extremely smart in her breeches, spurs and spats. A truly superb specimen of a lithe outdoor athlete.

After it was taken she disappeared, and in scarcely more time than it takes to say, "Straw presto, Jack Robinson!" she returned to the interviewers wondrously arrayed, and was immediately photographed reclining on a Chesterfield sofa buried in a bevy of downy cushions.

As she looked towards the camera in a dreamy ennuyée way, her azure eyes were irresistibly liquid, and were wistfully concealed beneath long, curving, luscious lashes. Her right hand idly toyed with a rope of rich pearls around her neck; whilst the forefinger of her left hand lightly rested on her chin—the remaining fingers falling on her neck and shoulders in willowy natural curves. A foot, taking barely "baby-3's" in high-heeled shoes, was exquisitely and with complete nègligéé poised in the centre of the picture.

The dress scheme was conceived in autumn leaf-brown drapery, and she wore a hat of silver-grey taffeta, on which was lying a large golden pheasant, his head reining forward over the brim and gently caressing the cheek of the stable lad.

The photographs over, the regular interviewers stepped forward and listened in wrapped attention. She told them fox-hunting and lion shooting were her favourite sports. Tennis and golf she had no use for, as she considered them too effeminate. She spent much of her time embroidering handkerchiefs for the poor. She had a penchant for blue velvet hats; whilst she fairly dotted on old pewter, of which she had already amassed a cellar full. But she told them, the pièce de résistance of her hobbies, when not lion shooting, was photographing ancient Roman Doric columns. These she thought had a subtle grandeur all their own, owing to the "tailor-made severity of design" which gave them a finish and dignity, as distinct from the more "flouncy and crinoline-like effect the canthus leaves gave the capitals of Corinthian columns, and made them look effeminate." She told them much more besides.

These announcements were punctuated by sips of liqueurs by the fair Diana, and chewing chunks of "chocs."
Altogether the interviewers were so astonished, that they concluded the interview with the following passage: "Interviewers, notwithstanding a superficial pleasantry and suavity of manner, are usually a pretty thick-skinned crowd; but in this instance they were fairly spell-bound and entranced by the penetrating personality, and 'arresting' originality of this truly remarkable young lady. They indeed predict a great future for her."

You will notice the closing remark is somewhat ambiguous, as they do not say how she is to attain the "great future."

Do they mean her name will be handed down to posterity as the greatest stable lad of all times? The photographs and "interviews" were broadcasted in large print in all the papers. Thus she sought to efface herself—instead she got fame!

Another "Society" friend of mine also tried her hand at self-effacement. She announced, I mean renounced, her rank and social position, and then became a humble film-artist. Judging by most recent accounts I gather she has got effacement right enough—at least as far as acting goes.

Altogether I understand quite a few young ladies nowadays find attempts at self-obliteration on the above lines unsatisfactory.

But I am afraid I am digressing a bit. We had by now well pushed off from Hong Kong, and were shaping our course due south, right into the teeth of the Eastern sun. However, the prospect of increasing heat did not alarm us, so overjoyed were we at the prospect of leaving the typhoon zone behind.

What a month of uncertainty and suspense we had been through! Our hearts, which during this time had been continuously in our mouths, now began to return to their normal positions. But let us draw a veil! With Helois I claim the privilege of the sundial, and henceforth will record only the hours of sunshine.

We did not call at Aden, but just as we were passing it out came the P. and O. ship "Sardinia," and steamed along only half a mile from us, and a couple of hundred yards ahead of us. We had a most exciting and interesting race up the Red Sea, literally steaming neck and neck; at one time we perhaps gaining 100 yards or so, then she pulling up, and going ahead a little.

This went on day after day until just at the top of the Red Sea when we struck a head wind, and as we had a little more cargo than she, the additional weight told in our favour against the wind and slight head-sea, and so we pulled ahead. But it was really a most exciting and interesting tussle whilst it lasted.

Well, as I said, in due course we fetched up at Gibraltar one sunny morning—to be exact it was 6.30 a.m. on October 20, 1922. Breakfast was served on board a bit early, in order to give passengers a long time on shore; and I seized the opportunity to "see the sick" early and go ashore also.
On landing I made a bee-line for the office of the Hon. Secretary situated under the Saluting Battery, and I was fortunate to find him there (the genial Wheeler). After mutual greetings, I lost no time in popping the question—"What has become of the 'Wasp'?"

He said: "All we have to do is go up on the Bastion and you can look down on her riding to her moorings in almost the identical spot you left her."

So up we went, and right enough there she was. Two men were approaching her in a punt; R. W. remarking that it was a curious coincidence I should look her up at the identical time when two new owners were taking her over, as the men in the punt were new owners who had bought her only the previous day. So down we went, got the club punt, and put off. R. W. introduced me to the new owners, who were two nice young fellows of the E.T.C.

The race with the "Sardinia."

I went on board and carefully examined the old "Wasp." Being on speaking terms with every plank and rib in her, I was in a position to be critical, but 'pon my word I couldn't see any change in her. She seemed sound as a bell. I then asked the owners if it would not be too inquisitive to ask what they had paid for her. The reply was "£100." One hundred pounds, and I had sold her for eight!

I think they would scarcely have believed that I had sold her for this sum, or I have believed that they had given £100 for her, had not R. W. been present to verify the statements.

She did not appear to be quite as well found as when I had her—the sails for instance were not Lapthorn.

I was told she had changed hands several times since I had her, and had done fairly well in the racing line.
When we were going down from the Bastion to get the punt, who should we run into but Lieutenant-Colonel C. of the "Gunners"—known to his friends as "Uncle." He was at Gibraltar with me, and when I left him behind. Later on when I was stationed at Multan, who should roll up there but "Uncle"; then in due course when I left Multan I left him there. So of course we had a great greeting at meeting once again at Gibraltar. And I promptly snapped him and R. W. on the verandah of the Yacht Club.

"Uncle" wanted me to lunch at the "South" Mess, but unfortunately it was too far out, and had I gone I would not have been able to do all I wanted in the time at my disposal.

Later I was very glad to meet Major M., also of the "Gunners"—doubly glad because he stood me a most excellent lunch at the "North" Mess. There I met Captains F. and R., also old Gibraltar friends. As I sat opposite them at table I thought—what times have passed since I last was in your mess! I had to promise them I would lunch with them the next time I looked into Gibraltar.

You can't beat a "Gunners'" mess for genuine hospitality.

When we came ashore from the "Wasp," we went along to near the Torpedo Camber, where most of the yachts had been berthed already in winter quarters. There I renewed acquaintance with the "Buccaneer," "Rosalind," "Dingbat" and others.

In my article in the Journal of May, 1914, I referred to the "Dingbat" (when I was looking out for a boat to buy) in the following terms: "The 'Dingbat' was a six-tonner, a fine roomy weatherly boat, with a good turn of speed, and sound as a bell. She was just what I wanted, so I went to £10 more than I thought she was worth; but as the owner wanted another £10 no business was done." I may now add I was subsequently very glad I did not buy her.

Before making an offer, I had arranged with the owner to go for a sail in her; but on the day appointed for the sail he put me off on some pretext. It did not occur to me at the time that perhaps he had an ulterior object in putting me off. So I was not suspicious; and she seemed so sound, and suitable in every way, and I had heard such favourable accounts of her, I was quite prepared to buy her without a trial.

It was only a long time afterwards that I found out she took a fearful weather-helm, and was well-nigh heart-breaking—or rather biceps breaking to handle. As she now lay on the quay she had an unsightly sheet of iron plastered on to the aft part of her keel—evidently an attempt by some recent owner to mitigate her "gripping"; and altogether she looked in rather sorry neglect and disrepair.

R. W.'s boat the "Lassie" was there also. As usual, kept up regardless of expense; and possessing every known (and unknown) device to ensure comfort and efficiency. For a boat of her size and lines, there is probably no boat to touch her for speed, sea-worthiness, and general comfort.
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Before parting with R. W. I had to promise him I would lunch with him the next time I looked in. What commitments I made in the lunch line!—I dare not go back.

In a stroll through the town I met some old friends—local residents. I was struck by the unanimity with which they assured me trade was bad, and that everything was the same, "no change," since I had been there before. I cannot vouch for the conditions of trade, but I only hope they were as much out in their estimate of it as they were in their assurance; there was "no change."

On a cursory walk around I saw improvements everywhere. Even before actually setting foot on shore I was struck by the great improvement and facilities for trade afforded by the addition of the pier to the North Mole.

There are no wharfs or quays for merchant ships to go alongside at Gibraltar; so all goods are landed, or shipped, by means of barges.

In my time the portion of the mole aft of where the Algeciras steamers berthed was a congested mass of bumping barges, lying one outside the other six and eight deep. Horrible confusion. Now the additional mole, or spur, which has been added on, and is broad and massively built, completely relieves this congestion.

But good and useful as this extension is, it has its faults. It starts in a north-easterly direction, and if it only continued in this direction it would afford complete protection from the nasty sea which runs in here with a strong north-west wind, and which causes much inconvenience in loading and unloading cargo, as well as damage to barges and boats through bumping. But unfortunately, after only a short distance in a north-east direction, the new mole turns sharply, and is carried towards the north-west. Why this should be, beats me—any advantage in it, in my opinion, would be much outweighed by the protection afforded by a north-easterly extension. But show me the pier or artificial harbour which has not got its disadvantage or weak point—only too often a disadvantage of this sort!

For the information of those who have not been to Gibraltar, I would mention that the Rock is separated from Spain by the "neutral territory," a strip of land, half a mile wide, extending across the flat isthmus from the Bay of Gibraltar on the one side to the Mediterranean on the other. No house or tree is to be seen on this strip of neutral ground; it is bare and deserted except on the single road which connects Spain with the Rock, and, as may be expected, the traffic on this road is considerable. But being on "neutral" ground, it was no man's darling and so it got into a shocking condition of neglect. That was before the war: now the road has a perfect metalled surface. Generally speaking the roads at the North Front were little better than the neutral road before the war. Now I found them all in perfect condition, with shrubs planted, and a general smartening up of the side-walks and precincts.

Especially good is the road to Catalina Bay; and when this scheme is
completed a delightful drive, completely encircling the Rock, will be provided, as the plans, I was informed, have already been approved to join the Cataline Bay road by a bridge, along the face of the steep rock, to the road leading to the “Governor’s Cottage” on the east side.

The unsightly Bay Side Barrier gates have been removed, and near by is an imposing war memorial.

An excellent improvement is that by which after leaving the Bay Side Barrier and going towards the town, one has now the choice of three roads, one leading directly into the town, another along the Line Wall Road, whilst a third leads outside Water Port Gates to the Moles, and along the front.

But, next to the new pier, the best improvement of all is perhaps the gap made in the Line Wall, with broad steps leading down to the naval football ground. These steps confer a great boon on the people shut in in the town, as formerly they had to walk considerable distances round to Water Port Gates, or other gates, before they could get out on the front for a stroll and breath of sea air, or to watch a football match, hockey or other games. Now they can get out at a bound, so to speak.

There are other improvements, too, but the foregoing are the chief I noticed. “No change!”

I also managed to take a run up to the Sandpit lawn tennis grounds. There I found the groundsman (Conte) with his broad grinning smile as of old; he seemed little changed. He told me he had been employed on the courts for twenty-six years, and he is now 39 years of age; with his light-hearted grin and jaunty walk he looked more like 19. He assured me I was “a very good major,” and that he liked me very much. There must be something radically wrong, with the member whom Conte, at one time or another, has not addressed in similar terms. Good nature and flattery are innate in him.

But it was not to look up Conte I went to the courts, my real object was to see what had become of the “new court.” In my time the three club courts were found insufficient for the demands on them, so a site for a new one was levelled off, and a contract made with a “home” firm for one of those red rubble ones. The contract, as well as I remember, was the club was to provide ninety tons of cinders, whilst the firm provided the rubble, and laid it for £100.

It was duly laid, and I played on it a few times, but I recollect it was very loose and rubbly, and it did not improve as it was supposed to do. This, I believe, was attributed to the local brackish (“sanitary”) water with which it was watered, and which was not considered suitable for the purpose.

Conte could not enlighten me on the reason why, but I found the £100 worth had been scrapped, and the court converted into an ordinary “mud” one, the same as the others. Experimenta docet.

By the way, it is not generally known that the deepest borings in the
world, in an effort to strike fresh water, have been made at Gibraltar. These, of course, were made at much expense, but the expense was fully justified as, had fresh water been struck, the huge outlay on blasting out the great tanks which subsequently had to be built in the interior of the rock to supply fresh water during the dry season, would have been saved. Even from the deepest borings the water drawn up is always brackish.

It would appear the few decent clothes I have are destined to be spoilt by the sea at Gibraltar.

In my article on "Yachting at Gibraltar," I related how I fell into the sea with a "West End" suit, and on this last call at Gibraltar I had an experience which, for all practical purposes, was similar, as far as clothes are concerned.

Instead of returning to the steamer in the tender with the passengers, I thought I would like a row back, so I went to the Yacht Club and got the attendant to take me out in a punt. When we got near the Mole entrance it commenced to blow very hard from the north-east, and a nasty steep little sea quickly got up. We shipped a lot of water, and I thought we would be swamped; but anyway, by the time we got to the steamer I was just as wet as if we had been.

Why is it there are no diving boys in Gibraltar harbour, whilst diving for coins is a flourishing industry at Malta? It cannot be due to climate, because the climatic conditions of both places are practically identical.
Passengers, and especially those making their first voyage abroad, are always interested in this diving, and one often sees a coin thrown into the water with much force in order to make it difficult for the diver to get. But this is wasted energy, as the coin quickly turns on its side, and the initial energy being lost, it slowly flutters to the bottom, flashing and glittering as it goes, and to recover it is comparatively easy, much easier than is thought. Boys seldom go for copper coins as they do not flash. It is not recovering the coin that fascinates and interests me but the way they get in and out of their canoes. The canoe in the foreground from which a boy has just dived (see snapshot) well illustrates this; it can be seen to be a mere wobbly shell, scarcely a foot in beam, and upset by the least thing. To jump from it quickly (as the boys do) without upsetting it, is extremely difficult, but to get back again is doubly so, and really requires marvellous dexterity. Yet I have never seen a boy upset his canoe getting either in or out.

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Echoes of the Past.

EXTRACTS FROM REGULATIONS 1808.
BY MAJOR W. R. GALWEY.
Royal Army Medical Corps.

The Editor, thirsting for copy, has given me two old books of Regulations and asked me to reconstruct from them a forgotten organization, a not uninteresting task.

These books are "The Instructions for Agents and Surgeons under the Commissioners for Conducting His Majesty's Transport Service for taking care of Sick and Wounded Seamen, and for the Care and Custody of Prisoners of War, as proposed by the Commissioners appointed for Revising the Civil affairs of His Majesty's Navy and established by His Majesty's Order in Council dated the 14th of September, 1808." What full-sounding titles they liked in those days!

The Instructions were printed by the Philanthropic Society, St. George's Fields, in 1809. They fill two fair-sized folios and contain in their appendices sufficient forms and pro-formas to satisfy the most exacting babu.

They are concerned with the management of Prisoners of War "At Home," by which apparently is meant in prisons, barracks, or prison ships, and "On Parole."

They provide for every possible contingency and detail in the lives of the prisoners, even to laying down the kind of coffin to be provided and the funeral expenses which might be incurred in case of death.