

Best Paid Navy on the Seas is Ours.

Officers Say that the Jackies are Well Fed and Well Clad, but Always Looking for Trouble.

[FROM THE TRIBUNE BUREAU.]
Washington, May 27.—Nothing in a long time has attracted so much attention in the Navy Department than the interviews printed last Sunday in The Tribune with enlisted men of the United States Navy. The expressions of opinion, directed upon the causes of desertion from the standpoint of the Jackies, had a value which entitled them to careful and respectful consideration, although they did not go unchallenged among commissioned officers on duty in Washington.

In the first place, there is no admission in the Bureau of Navigation that the desertions from the navy are abnormal. That impression has gone abroad largely by reason of exaggerations and conditions on board ship contained in the complaints of sailors, who are not infrequently misled and misled to remain out of the service once they are out. In the last twelve months the percentage of desertions, taking the navy as a whole, amounted to only 10.7, not as great as in the army, where the percentage is not such as to give rise to alarm. The percentages in the various branches were as follows: Marines, 7.7; artificers, 5.4; engine room force, 17.1; special, 5.7; commissary, 5.7, and messmen, 23.5.

It is doubtful, say their officers, if any amount of correction of alleged or real abuses within the service will reduce this percentage appreciably. This is mainly due to the fact that most of the desertions take place in the first few days of enlistment, and are not the result of dissatisfaction with the conditions of service, but of the impression that they are, generally speaking, greatly interested in the welfare of the enlisted men and will fight for the rights of the bluejacket to the end.

CAUSES OF DESERTION.

That there are probably two prime causes for desertion the landlubber is apt to determine when he has heard both sides of the question. One is the lack of employment for the enlisted men and the consequent opportunity for the sailors to find fault and become discontented; the other reason is the impression of some of the officers, who do not understand that authority can be exercised without using strong language to a subordinate or otherwise humiliating an enlisted man.

Both conditions may be corrected without difficulty, although it may require some able officers to be made over. The criticisms repeated to The Tribune by the enlisted men and the officers interviewed regarding the service are said by some to be without reason, except in some small particulars. It is held that the naval enlisted force enjoys many advantages, and a comparison of the American with foreign navies cannot help being favorable to the United States service. There are such advantages to the men as are expressed in these qualities:

1. The best fed navy in the world.
2. The best clad navy in the world.
3. The best paid navy in the world.
4. More diversion allowed than in any other navy in the world.
5. Greater opportunities for young men than in any other navy in the world.

DEFENCE OF THE FOOD.

Whoever made those criticisms to The Tribune reporter in New-York, said Paymaster General H. T. B. Harris, of the navy, "did not know of what he was talking. It was arrant nonsense, so far as it attacked the food and clothing and the work of the naval paymasters. We pay a good price for provisions, such as 30 cents a pound for butter. We buy the best meat the market affords. We send it to the ships in the tropics, even, on refrigerator ships. In holiday time the enlisted men everywhere had their turkeys off the loo, just as their relatives in the States or Brooklyn had. The same is true of vegetables.

It is possible that meats have sometimes deteriorated. Such instances have been known at home, you know, among the housekeepers, who have their groceries and markets to draw upon. But whenever food is spoiled, it is destroyed. It is never issued to the enlisted men as such. If there are instances of such a nature it is the fault of the men themselves for not at once reporting the circumstance to the commanding officer. You ask Armour and Swift and the other contractors, with whom we are always wrestling, whether they are allowed to get in any spoiled canned goods.

THE CLOTHING QUESTION.

"Take the criticism on the clothing. There must be uniform for the enlisted men. It has to be made up in lots of various sizes, just as shoes are; but we aim to have every sort of combination of dimensions in order to fit the variety of sizes and shapes of the sailors. We have seventeen sizes of trousers, for instance, but of course there will now and then be found men who cannot be fitted even under these conditions. We have shoes of sizes from 7 to 11, and so on. There is no such thing as handing out uniforms at random and then requiring men to have them fitted at great expense. There is a difference, of course, in the notions of commanding officers respecting the appearance of their sailors, and probably a sloppy man thinks he has been unfairly treated when he is hauled up and told to present himself in a decent appearance. We have tailors on board ship and there is no need of a man going to the shore tailor and spending all his money on his apparel. The allowance for clothing is liberal and men are not expected to make much out of it.

"The attack on the quality of the material out of which uniforms are made is also absurd. We pay a dollar a yard for flannel, better than enters into most of the suits of clothing worn by men anywhere in this country. The British government pays 20 cents for cloth, which would, at the outside, sell in this country for 40 cents a yard. That disposes of the story that we buy cheap goods. In other respects a good grade of material is bought, even to the extent of not accepting the lowest bid when something better at a higher price offers itself. This is the case with the contract awarded this year for flannel, the two lower bids being rejected."

The navy paymasters have heard most of the complaints before and were not specially moved save by one remark credited to a Jackie of long service. He said plainly that the paymasters served food and clothing on the "norms" so as to put the savings in their pockets. One naval pay officer expressed the desire to get hold of the sailor who would make such a remark. Any one, he said, who knows the rigmarole of official transactions knows that it is impossible for a naval paymaster to profit in any such criminal fashion. He would be found out inside of a week and put off the ship in disgrace, and that greater care should be exercised in not keeping a ship too long on one station, especially in the tropics. They have always been called in consultation in the drawing of plans for ships of war, with the result that the features of ventilation in the living quarters, recreation for the crew on shipboard and on shore and the hygiene of the table have been improved. There is now no complaint against the surroundings, as was the case once upon a time.

THEIR HEALTH GOOD.

The medical officers of the navy have their theories of desertion, too, and they read The Tribune interviews with great interest. They naturally do not sympathize with the complaints, and they look at the situation more from a professional standpoint. They say that greater liberty should be given the sailor and that greater care should be exercised in not keeping a ship too long on one station, especially in the tropics. They have always been called in consultation in the drawing of plans for ships of war, with the result that the features of ventilation in the living quarters, recreation for the crew on shipboard and on shore and the hygiene of the table have been improved. There is now no complaint against the surroundings, as was the case once upon a time.

THE SHORE LEAVE GRIEVANCE.

Line officers of the navy who have had experience at sea and who understand perfectly the conditions attaching to the life of the enlisted force admit the justice of some of the criticisms made by the enlisted men who were interviewed by The Tribune reporter. It is realized, of course, that there is always the personal equation to be reckoned with both on the side of the Jackies and the officer. There are men who have an abiding discontent as a part of their temperament. There are officers who possess all of the elements of making an unhappy ship.

This was the case with the commanding officer of a vessel which within a year touched at San Diego. The men on board were restless. Their commanding officer was a good one when he was measured by all the characteristics of courage and honesty, but he was a hard taskmaster, brusque in manner, and unreasonable in his expectations and demands upon the men. No less than seventy of them chartered an entire Pullman train at San Diego and came East in defiance of desertion, the intention of which they did not disguise.

It is possible, say the line officers, to learn from a sailor who has served on one of these unhappy ships that the navy is ill fed, poorly clad, overworked, unjustly punished and too much officered. The most conservative and liberal of the line opinions in regard to the conditions attaching to the life of the enlisted men in the navy are those which recognize that certain changes might be

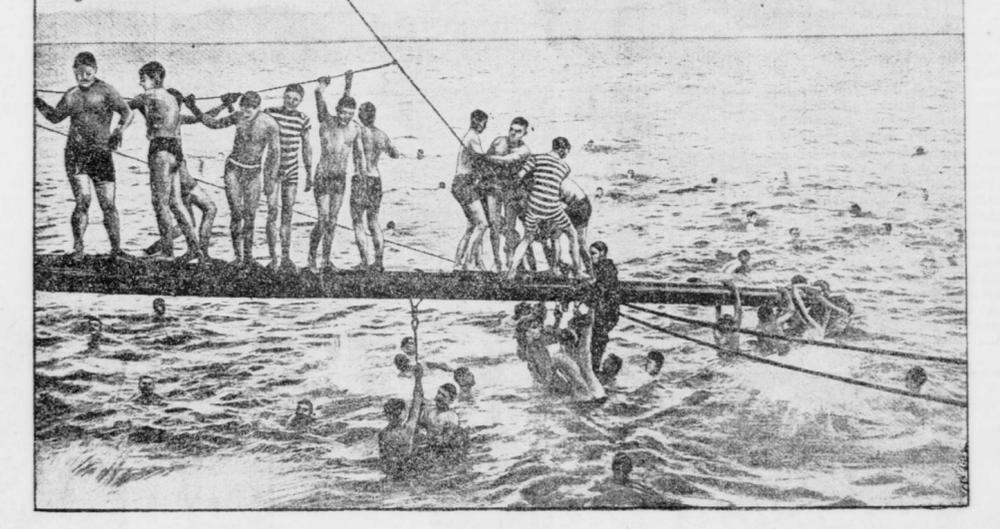
NAVAL PUNISHMENTS.

In the matter of punishment the extent and character of the measure of control are regulated by the statutes. No commanding officer has the right to withhold pay unless the man is absent without leave, and, of course, one cannot expect and does not receive pay for services not rendered. It is natural for persons who are punished to think that they are treated unjustly, but it is in the interest of discipline that offenders shall be punished. Line officers insist that there is no justification for implying that the pay of any man is arbitrarily or unjustly withheld or that any sailor is so compelled to forfeit any part of his compensation. This can only be done by a process of court martial or by a long system of reports and official action, which includes a full examination of the case in Washington. It takes six months of paper work and an examination of the case by many officers before any man loses any part of his pay. Line officers say also that the system of discipline in the American navy is much more lenient than in any other navy in the world.

The question of the relations between junior officers and the sailors is a delicate one for service discussion, but perhaps the most unprejudiced opinion was expressed by a high ranking officer on the active list in Washington, who has a reputation of knowing how to handle men. He said: "There are, of course, young men in the navy who might be described as 'haughty.' They enjoy the distinction of command and relish the opportunity of giving orders, and, doubtless, some of them are careless of the feelings of their subordinates. I have seen instances of this, and I can understand

RELAXATION AMPLY PROVIDED.

This latter consideration is one which has by no means escaped the naval authorities. They have devised all sorts of ways of entertaining the enlisted force on shore and at sea, and a board of officers is at present in session in the navy department, with Captain C. E. Vreeland, U. S. N., as senior officer, to get up a system of athletics which may be practised on board ship. Then, there are



THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SWIMMING AS TAUGHT IN THE NAVY. —(The Graphic.)

made with the result of contributing to the contentment of the sailor.

It is admitted, for instance, that there are cases where shore is arbitrarily denied when it might be profitably granted. In most instances, however, the commanding officers show sufficient liberality in this matter, it being recognized that after confinement on shipboard the men enjoy getting "on the beach," but there are instances where the members of crews have been benefited by the denial of shore leave, especially at those places where their health would be jeopardized if they went ashore, and where they would probably have squandered their money.

There is argument among the line officers here that the criticism of the "grub" is unfair. If any man went hungry because he could not eat the food set before him, it was his own fault, and if any cook's assistant was guilty of preparing food which was not fit to eat, he did not do his duty. Food which is tainted is thrown away in the navy. The "cook's assistant" was interviewed by The Tribune reporter, say the line officers, ought to have been discharged in disgrace for doing the things of which he confessed he was guilty. If such a system existed it was because the cooks were in collusion and for some reason despised the officers, but even that does not show why the men should have been served with rotten meat and mildewed biscuit.

It is admitted that there might be some just complaint over the question of uniforms, and it is so stated that there are some officers who are so exacting as to be unreasonable in their ideas of how a sailor should dress. When a man strikes

the American spirit in the enlisted men may rebel against a too frequent and unnecessary exercise of the prerogative of authority. But this concept, if one may call it such, is not confined to the junior officers of the navy. It is not characteristic of youth whenever it is found in places of command; young men get over that feeling in time, and I am inclined to think that it does not abide very long with the junior officers of our navy, and certainly after confinement on shipboard the men enjoy getting "on the beach," but there are instances where the members of crews have been benefited by the denial of shore leave, especially at those places where their health would be jeopardized if they went ashore, and where they would probably have squandered their money.

GROG AND OVERWORK.

The question of grog is a matter of legislation. There is naturally a difference of opinion regarding the value of grog. Perhaps the opinion expressed by Rear Admiral A. S. Barker, U. S. N., until recently commander in chief of the North Atlantic Fleet, may be regarded as best. Expressing the service views, he said: "The navy is to be congratulated that the department has remained firm in excluding wine and beer from the canteen of ships. The tendency of the times is toward total abstinence. Railroad companies do not employ men to drink intoxicating liquors because of the increased danger of accidents and consequent claims for damages. The majority of enlisted men come from good homes and are temperate. In it, therefore, not better to weed out the few intemperate and raise the standard still higher than to disgust many self-respecting men and lower the tone of the service."

No officer can be found in the service to agree to the proposition that the enlisted man is overworked. That complaint is treated as a joke. There is, moreover, no deception practiced by recruiting officers in the effort to obtain recruits. The work is allotted in such a way as to give every one plenty of time for recreation on shipboard and on shore. Every possible encouragement is given to athletics and while forty or fifty of the North Atlantic fleet were at Guantanamo this spring the

\$2,000,000-volume libraries with which each ship is provided, the books being selected with a view to entertainment of the men in a large assortment of books of fiction, and their material assistance by the addition of works on the sciences and the trades and professions. This furnishes the combination of physical and intellectual exercises, which ought to improve the condition on board ship. Finally, the naval officers do not appear to be worried over the situation and they are willing that the lot of men anywhere, in any walk of life shall be compared with the life of the American blue-jacket. They believe the latter is considerably treated in most instances, with a showing of manly affection for him on the part of officers when he does his duty—and he can always be depended upon to do that when confronted with hard, arduous and perilous tasks. Some of the older enlisted men think the service has changed in this and that the toughs who were wont to serve before the mast—the days of the baying pin—have been succeeded by softer natures; but the officers say the men of the present navy are no less faithful and no less prompt to respond to the most dangerous of the calls to duty.

PAY IN OUR NAVY.

The pay of the sailor in the American navy, according to L. B. Hamersley, of New York, publisher of the "General Navy Register," and other naval works, is fifty per cent higher than that in any other navy in the world. That the United States pays higher wages is indicated by the fact that foreign sailors enlist freely. In the Spanish-American war the crews of the gunners on the fighting ships had served in the British and other navies. Only American yacht owners, who offer bonuses, pay higher wages to sailors than the United States.

ANDREW LANG ON DOGS.

There is not one of the seven deadly sins of which the dog is not habitually guilty, and I am

ON THE PACIFIC COAST.

Professor Loeb Tells of Experiments in Fertilizing Eggs.

San Francisco, May 26.—Next week the trial of Frank Maestretti, President of the Board of Public Works, will begin for alleged subornation of perjury. This trial will be noteworthy, as it will mark the first appearance in court of any of the leaders of the local administration. Heretofore mere tools of corrupt officials have been tried, and two have been convicted of ballot box stuffing. Maestretti was the alleged manager of their criminal work, and now he is to be tried for coaching witnesses in their cases as to how to avoid testifying to the truth. With the strong evidence against Maestretti he should be promptly convicted and sent to San Quentin, but he has retained a formidable array of counsel, and will make a bitter technical fight. All the resources of the corruptionists will be lavished on his defence, as his conviction would mean a great loss of prestige to "Boss" Ruff and Mayor Schmitz.

ATLANTIC CITY AFFAIRS.

Early Bathing Season—Roller Chair Floral Parade.

Atlantic City, May 27 (Special).—In spite of the fact that the nights here have been cool, it has been warm in the middle of the day, and especially so between noon and 4 o'clock. This has resulted in a good many of the visitors taking a dip in the ocean between those hours, and so numerous have the bathers become that Mayor Stoy has directed the first squad of life guards to begin their service for the season on the first day of June. As a rule, the guards do not go into service until the middle of June. There is another reason for the Mayor ordering the guards in service so early, and that is the meeting of the National Hotel Men's Mutual Benefit Association in the week of June 5. The Mayor wants the guards to be in perfect form by that time, for he has promised to give an exhibition drill to prove to the visitors their efficiency in coping with dangers incident to accidents in the water. The men will have a drill in the management of the boats, casting of the life buoy, entering the surf after drowning persons, and in the work of giving "first aid to the injured."

Atlantic City will draw its patronage from all parts of the country this year. This especially refers to the excursion patronage, for arrangements are now being perfected by the various railroad companies to run excursions here from the East, West, North and South. For the first time in the history of the resort special excursions will be run here from Canada. While the resort for the last several years has enjoyed a large patronage from Canada, the railroad companies have never before attempted to bring an excursion from over the border line to the Atlantic Coast. The Canadian excursion will start on August 10.

With the advance guard of the incoming summer crowd, the police are getting a foretaste of the trouble of looking after lost children. Several have been picked up in the last week or two, and it will be but a matter of a week or so before the city will have to establish its usual lost child bureau at one of the piers. It has been suggested that a law might be passed by the legislature compelling parents or guardians to place tags bearing their names and addresses on all children when they are under eight years of age, so that in event of their getting separated and lost from their parents or friends the police could easily send the child back to its home or hotel. Captain of Police Charles W. Maxwell is endeavoring to get the city to supply a quantity of neat little tags for this purpose and have them distributed among the various hotels and boarding houses of the resort in the coming summer, so that the police will not be bothered with the care of lost children at headquarters or at the pier bureau until some parent or guardian calls for them.

If the roller chair floral parade on the boardwalk is not a success, it will not be through any fault of the secretary or other members of the committee that has the affair in charge. They are hustling from morning until night, and there has been a large entry list up to this time. Miss Sherrick, the secretary, is now making a personal canvass of the hotels and business houses of the resort, with the result that almost all whom she has seen have given her their word that they will enter a chair or chairs. It is expected that there will be at least a couple of hundred chairs in the line of parade and two bands of music. The reviewing stand will be in front of the Steel Pier.

Another affair which will come off a little earlier than the floral parade is the marine parade, which will officially open the yachting season on Memorial Day. This matter is under the charge of the members of the Atlantic City Yacht Club, and the handsome clubhouse on Gardner's Basin will be open to visitors and inspection all that day. The parade will form in the inlet and pass out and down along the city waterfront and the piers as far as Chelsea and return. All of the yachts of the inlet fleet will be in the line of parade, in addition to about seventy private boats of all styles and sizes. All will be elaborately decorated with flags, and the procession will be headed by Commodore Louis Kuehne, in the flagship of the Yacht Club, the Katherine K., on which will be a band of music.

There is a rumor that an automobile coach Asbury Park in the summer, over the ocean boulevard route. The report, over the ocean boulevard route, is that the coach will be a large touring car, capable of holding almost as many passengers as the ordinary day coach will make on trip each way daily.

Mayor Wyman, of Allegheny, and Mayor Hayes, of Pittsburgh, are bidden to attend a banquet at the Inlet next week. It is understood that both Mayors will be here at that time.

How to Detect Harmful Acids in Your Food.

In this article I will discuss the preservation of foods, and suggest simple methods for the detection of chemical preservatives. The march of civilization is accompanied by a growing tendency to increase the number and variety of foods. This has led to the adoption of methods of preservation that would make possible the preparation of foods near the place of their production in such a way as to make them available when they cannot be obtained in the fresh state, and in localities where they would be otherwise unknown. Many of these methods are old. Some of them antedate civilization itself. Among such may be mentioned preservation by drying, and by means of salt, vinegar, sugar and wood smoke. Articles so preserved can be distinguished readily by the taste and are never confused with fresh foods.

The canning of foods has been practised for more than a century. This method is now as well known as the first one mentioned, and for generations has been extensively used in the household. Commercially, the canned goods industry has reached enormous proportions and has accomplished much in broadening the menu for the winter months. Food so prepared is shorter time than those preserved by the preceding methods.

Finally we have the so-called "chemical preservatives"—such as salicylic acid, benzoic acid, borax, formaldehyde, sulphites and fluorides. Foods preserved with these substances have every appearance of being fresh and untreated. The detection of chemical preservatives, therefore, becomes a matter of importance.

The determination can be made best with liquids. Solid and semi-solid foods, such as jelly, should be dissolved, when soluble, in sufficient water to make them thin liquids. Foods containing insoluble matter, such as jam, marmalade and sausage, may be macerated with water and strained through a piece of white cotton cloth. The maceration may be performed by rubbing in a teacup or other convenient vessel with a heavy spoon.

Salicylic acid is used for preserving fruit products of all kinds, including beverages. It is frequently sold by drug stores as fruit acid. Preserving powders, consisting entirely of salicylic acid, are often carried from house to house by agents. It may be detected as follows: Between two and three ounces of the liquid described above are placed in a narrow bottle holding about five ounces, about a quarter of a teaspoonful of cream of tartar (or, better, a few drops of sulphuric acid) added, the mixture shaken for two or three minutes, and filtered into a small bottle. Three or four teaspoonfuls of chloroform are added to the clear liquid in the second bottle, and the liquids mixed by a somewhat vigorous rotary motion, poured into an ordinary glass tumbler, and allowed to stand until the chloroform settles to the bot-

Told by Dr. W. D. Bigelow, Chief of the Division of Foods, Bureau of Chemistry, United States Department of Agriculture.

tom. Shaking is avoided, as it causes an emulsion which is difficult to break up. As much as possible of the chloroform layer (which now contains the salicylic acid) is removed, but without any admixture of the aqueous liquid, by means of a medicine dropper, and placed in a test tube or small bottle with about an equal amount of water and a small fragment—little larger than a pinhead—of iron filings. The mixture is thoroughly shaken and allowed to stand till the chloroform again settles to the bottom. The presence of salicylic acid is then indicated by the purple color of the upper layer of liquid.

Benzoic acid is also used for preserving fruit products. The sample is extracted with chloroform, as in the case of salicylic acid. The chloroform layer is removed and placed in a white saucer, or, better, in a plain glass saucer dish. A vessel of water—as warm as the hand will bear—is now set on the outside of the window ledge, and the dish containing the chloroform extract is placed on the vessel with its bottom resting in the water. The window is now closed until the chloroform has completely evaporated. In this manner the operation may be conducted with safety even by one who is not accustomed to handling chloroform. In warm weather the vessel of warm water may, of course, be omitted. Benzoic acid, if present in considerable amount, will now appear in the dish in characteristic flat crystals. On warming the dish the unmistakable irritating odor of benzoic acid may be obtained. This method will detect benzoic acid in tomato ketchup or other articles in which it is used in large quantities. It is not sufficiently delicate, however, for the small amount used in some articles, such as wine. It is often convenient to extract a larger quantity of the sample and divide the chloroform layer into two portions, testing one for salicylic acid and the other for benzoic acid. Boric acid (also called boric acid) and its

compound with sodium (borax) are often used to preserve animal products, such as sausage, butter and sometimes milk. For the detection of boric acid and borax, solids may be macerated with a small amount of water and strained through a fine cotton cloth. The liquid obtained by treating sausage in this manner may be clarified somewhat by thoroughly chilling and filtering through filter paper. In testing butter, a heaping teaspoonful of the sample may be placed in a teacup, a couple of teaspoonfuls of hot water added, and the cup placed in a vessel containing a little hot water until the butter is thoroughly melted. The contents of the cup are then mixed by stirring with a spoon and the cup with the spoon in it set in a cold place till the butter is solid. The spoon with the butter cup, and the turbid liquid remaining strained through a white cotton cloth, or better, through filter paper. The liquid will not all pass through the cloth or filter paper, but a sufficient amount for the test may be drawn readily.

In testing milk for boric acid, two or three tablespoonfuls of milk are placed in a bottle spoonful of about amount of solution of a teaspoonful of alum solution of a teaspoonful of acetic acid and five drops of a solution of turmeric (marigold) acid added. A strip of turmeric paper is now dipped into the liquid and lamp—held dry. If boric acid or borax is present in the sample the turmeric paper becomes a bright cherry red when dry. A drop of household ammonia changes the red color to a greenish or greenish black. If the color to dark chloric acid is used the turmeric paper becomes a bright cherry red color even in the absence of boric acid. In this case, however, ammonia changes the color to brown just as it does into the acid solution. If turmeric paper is not available it may be prepared by dissolving turmeric powder (which may be found in any drug store) in alcohol, dipping a strip of filter paper into the solution and drying it.

The other preservatives mentioned above—for preserving foods, the former with frequent use and the latter with great products. The suitable for household use.