AHOY! THE WABBLE ONCE MORE

SHE NOT ONLY GOT IN BUT SHE SAT FOR HER PICTURE.

Unluckily She Was Just Out of the Field, Having Rheumatism in Her Only Paddle-wheel, but Uncle Heinie Hassenpfeffer Has Taken on a Dime Museum Stunt.

THE PONCE. The missing steamship which was towed into Hamilton, Bermuda, by the steamship "Wable." Disabled by a broken shaft, she was twelve days overdue.—*Legend under a half-tone of the Ponce in the New York Times yesterday.*

In order that readers of THE SUN may first become imbued with a proper deep sea feeling—and incidentally that the typewriter may become limbered up for the work in hand—let's all burst into song:

Oh, it was an able fisherman
Set sail from Billingsgate
To catch the lovely codfish and the shy mack-a-rel;
But when he was off Pimlico
The winds they did so stormy blow
That he wabbled and he wabbled o'er the waters so briny, oh!

Now to proceed:

Nautical experts all over Greater New York, from Yaphank, L. I., to Peapack, N. J., declared with one voice yesterday that never before in naval history has the good ship Wabble been spoken twice in so rapid succession. In fact two weeks have not gone by—it was only a week ago last Friday, to be exact—since the cable editor of the *Evening Mail* beat the town with a story of the rescue of the overdue Ponce by the Wabble, and the very next morning THE SUN confirmed the beat in an extended story, ostentatiously placed, first column, fifth page. In view of the Wabble's well known habit of constantly cutting a wide circular swath in the middle of the Atlantic, and as a rule shyly avoiding the beaten track, this second news, in yesterday's *Times*, of the foolish old tramp caused consternation bordering on incredulity. It was sadly noted, too, from the *Times's* beat that the Wabble has busted one of her starboard lower case b's and is now merely the Wable. If this disintegration continues so rapidly she is in danger of going from Wable to Wbl and finally falling out of the ship news columns altogether before the passing of many years.

It may be necessary to explain to those who are not up on ships in chronic commission how the Wabble was discovered by the special correspondent for the *Evening Mail* in the early afternoon editions of January 11. Just as this early, very early, edition was about to be put to bed on that afternoon a too terse cable was received at the Broadway offices of the New York and Porto Rico Line—owners of the belated Ponce—from a Hamilton ship firm on the job which read:

"Steamer ponce in tow off bermuda of tramp steamer wabble."

Instantly cable editors ripped the front page forms apart, and because of the excitement of changing the makeup they were unable to hear loud voices crying from the Broad street offices of the Maritime Exchange:

"'Wabble' isn't the name of a steamer. 'Wabble' is a word in the A B C code that means, 'Shall we act as your agents?'"

There was no time for mere differences of opinion. In a few minutes the other papers would flash green and red news along Broadway that the Ponce had been saved. High above the roar of the presses came a sharp cry:

"Now that the special cable desk is cleared for action, who will write it?"

"I will!"

"Who are you?"

"The ship news expert!"

"Let 'er go! Heave ho, my hearty!"

When, a few minutes later, the newsies raced into Broad street with the facts about the Wabble in black and white even then the Maritime seers stubbornly refused to give in. But there it was, right under the job type:

(*Special cable to the Evening Mail.*)

* * * The overdue steamship Ponce was towed into port here to-day by the German tramp steamer Wabble. * * * The sea was smooth throughout, but the Wabble, a craft much smaller than the Ponce, had all she could do to lug the crippled liner along. * * * Her tail shaft is broken. (The same which is the Ponce, perhaps.) The Wabble will get about $100,000 for salvage, &c.

Later in the afternoon some one lost his nerve in the face of the over cocksure leers from the maritime experts and the Wabble disappeared from subsequent editions. This backdown was regretted the next morning when THE SUN told not only of the building of the Wabble but of the career of her famous skipper, Capt. Heinie Hassenpfeffer. Now, ten days later, the *Times* publishes a deep sea picture in which one can actually taste the salt in one's face as the Wabble kicks up a splendid spray, just out of the photograph, with her single sidewheel, like a sea dog digging sod with both port legs in splints.

In the photograph is seen a perfectly dandy steamer posing gracefully for the camera squad, with First Mate Koeponick standing on the front stoop of the boat. Signal flags are set to form the greeting: "Hi-lee, Hi-lo! Hi-lee, Hi-lo! Bei Uns geht's immer, Je immer, je schlimmer! Hi-lee, Hi-lo! Hi-lee, Hi-lo! Bei Uns geht's immer, ja so-o-o!" In the background is a clear full length portrait of the water line of Ypsilanti, Mich. Sea cows graze under the flashlit lemon trees on the hills further back. Gulls are twittering tra-la-la. Maltese crosses show where Capt. Hassenpfeffer sits in the cellar of the Wabble, picking sprouts and barnacles off the potatoes, and curved dotted lines leading from the deck skylight and over the banister that fences in the deck to keep the crew from rolling off when she wabbles indicate course taken by barnacles and potato sprouts when thrown deftly by the skipper from the cellar, up through the skylight and into the water. A great cloud of exhaust steam is issuing from the circular kitchen window of the Wabble, where the ship's butler is cooking a group of sauerkraut. Tiny waves skip and laugh to and fro. It is impossible to read the name under the back eaves of the tramp. She probably wabbled a bit as the flashlight was touched off.

When word filtered around town yesterday afternoon that the good old Wabble herself had been sighted off Fire Island as recently as 10:28 o'clock last Friday night working her way stern foremost toward Broadway and Forty-second street young Mr. Thomas Stapleton, one of THE SUN'S coolest headed office boys, was hastily sent over to find out from Capt. Hassenpfeffer's sister, Mrs. Lena Katzenjammer, at her pleasant home in Würzburger strasse, Hoboken, whether there was anything to it.

"Well, we try to keep all news of the Wabble secreted," said Mrs. Katzenjammer, "but the way you up to date newspapers keep a hunch on her doings to me a surprisement is."

"Enough, woman," cried THE SUN'S representative, "you have to show me. Where's Capt. Hassenpfeffer."

"Down at Stouch's, Coney Island," blurted out little Hans and Fritz Katzenjammer, emptying a scuttle of coal on their mother's head in three colors and a key plate. "Uncle Heinie iss going to give up der sea for a contract by a Fourteenth street museum, und der manatcher is keeping him under cover down by Stouch's."

Mr. Stapleton says that never in all his journalistic career has he seen a more surprised man than the skipper of the Wabble when Capt. Hassenpfeffer was discovered exclusively by THE SUN seated in Stouch's conversing with a Sunday hard boiled sandwich.

"We had not a intention of making port for a couple of years," declared Skipper Hassenpfeffer, "but a couple of days after we saved the Ponce and while we were again at sea sailing around and around said assistant Fleet Officer Koeponick says to me, 'Skipper, the paddle wheel is cutting up badly, sir.'

"'What's the matter?' I says.

"'Rheumatizzm'? says the first offizier.

"I should know it. Every time the Wabble gets out of the Gululuf stream into colder water she gets rheumatizzm of the paddle wheel. So I quick give the order, 'Stant by to take a pull on the tea kettle halliards! Head 'er nor'-nor'west toward the north flatiron. Back pedal all. A tot of grog all around and a double tot for me.'

"That did it and here we are here. Quick I come ashore yesterday in the Wabble's dinky and got a offer to go on the stadge. But Hans and Fritz iss little liars if they say I am going to kvit the seas for good. I am a stadge actor only till spring comes and the warm weather drives away the paddle wheel rheumatizzm. Then off to the briny for uss."

Capt. Hassenpfeffer announced that the Wabble is still far from being a well woman but that just as soon as her indisposition subsides she will be worked into this harbor if it takes all summer. As soon as his theatrical engagement is over the skipper says he will take on a cargo here and start for some other place. The Wabble's launch was tugging lustily yesterday afternoon at a float covered with new companionways and portholes for the German tramp, and as fast as they were hauled aboard the Wabble they were put in place. As soon as the Wabble's present cargo of hall bedrooms is lightered ashore she will take on a cargo of elevator shafts for the tropics.

First Officer Koeponick led a merry party of sailors through the Tenderloin yesterday, all wearing cap bands bearing the legend "G. T. S. S. Wabble" in gold letters. Later in the evening the party went over to Jersey to call on P. T. Kidder, the Ponce passenger who gave such valued information about the Wabble to the earliest correspondents on the job. While here the first officer says he is under contract to write exclusively for a local paper.

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THE INQUISITIVE CAB HORSE.

Enters a Jeweller's Front Window in an Evening Ramble.

A hansom cab horse, whose driver, John McCubbin, wasn't around, got a wireless call from somewhere while waiting in Astor Court last night and strolled eastward on Thirty-fourth street. At Fifth avenue a tangle of cars bewildered him and he started to swing south.

He got out of his course, pulled the cab across the sidewalk and tried to get into Chester Billings's jewelry store by way of the plate glass front. His head and the shafts succeeded, making a big hole in the window and puncturing a velvet curtain. There was no jewelry in the window.

The horse's neck was somewhat cut. Two watchmen inside and two cops without watched the score the rest of the night.

PLAYWRIGHTS EAT FOR ONCE.

FITCH AND THEODORE KREMER AMONG THOSE ABSENT.

Mrs. Conrad Announces That the Women Are to Have a Club of Their Own —J. I. C. Clarke and Charles Klein Among the Talking Authors Present.

Without the presence of Augustus Thomas, George Ade, Theodore Kremer, Charles E. Blaney or Clyde Fitch one would imagine that not enough American playwrights could be gathered together for a feed to make the waiter's tip worth while. Nevertheless there were almost 150 diners present last night at Delmonico's at the annual dinner of the American Dramatists' Club.

For the first time in the club's dinnerdom the leading lady authors were also among those present.

Charles Klein was the guest of honor, and Bronson Howard presided. Mrs. Martha Morton Conrad, who said she wasn't ashamed to own up to the title of dean of the women dramatists, sat at Mr. Howard's left and made the cleverest speech of the evening. She announced that only the day before the women playwrights had formed an organization to be known as the Society of Dramatic Authors.

Inquiries as to the reason for holding the dinner on Sunday night brought forth the information that Sunday is the only night on which Clyde Fitch isn't bringing forth a new play or two. As Mr. Fitch wasn't present a rumor gained ground during the evening that he had thought of another plot while passing the Grand Central Station and had been so late in finishing it that he missed the coffee. Nevertheless one of his friends read a message to the effect that the truth is that the girl who has everything is on the straight road to the house of mirth. It made an awful hit.

In an extended review of the achievements of American play makers of the past two years by J. I. C. Clarke almost everybody in the house got a chance to get up and make a bow. Miss Rachel Crothers, all in pink, got her cue when Mr. Clarke referred to "The Three of Us" as a play that "is simple, but still avoids the usual." [Cries of "Author, Author!"]

"Ah, isn't it sweet," murmured Mr. Clarke when Miss Crothers subsided tremulously, "to see so beautiful, so fairylike a creature rise to those cries!" [Appreciative sighs of "A-a-a-ah me!"]

William Vaughn Moody got a bow for "The Great Divide" and the youthful-looking James Forbes was knocked all adrift by the applause that greeted the mention of "The Chorus Lady." Others who won a mention were Henry Blossom, Sydney Rosenfeld, Marguerite Merrington, W. C. DeMille, John Philip Sousa, Elizabeth Marbury, Edwin Milton Royle, Wilton Lackaye, ("our youngest brother"), Percy MacKaye, Avery Hopwood, George Broadhurst and, of course, Charles Klein, who got so many roses pinned on him that there was danger of the supply petering out. Mr. Klein bore his honors easily, as he has acquired the guest of honor habit of late.

Mrs. Martha Morton Conrad in speaking of the new club of women dramatists said that the women playwrights had long needed something of the sort, so that after a success they too might seek the seclusion of a clubhouse and have a fellow—or sister—dramatist come in and with a slap on the back say, just like the men:

"Great, my girl! Why, that was so good I might have written it myself.

"I began writing plays twenty years ago," continued Mrs. Conrad fearlessly, "and I say that without a tremor because I was very, very young then [laughter], so young that I wrote dramas. Since then I have been treated just like a man dramatist. I've had successes; I've been hustled off the stage by the stage manager; I've been ro-o-oasted till I frizzled and I've had one little failure from which I learned much. To-night I have reached the zenith of success—I've at last been invited to the dramatists' dinner. All there is left for me to live for now is the hope that some day I may be permitted to write a skit for the Lambs.

George Ade wrote that he was sorry he couldn't be present to "help honor the king pin of dramatists." Mr. Ade expressed a wish also that Mr. Klein would "stop for a while to give the rest of us a chance to catch up." A letter of regret was also read from Augustus Thomas.

Among others in attendance were Col. George Harvey, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Thompson, Marshall P. Wilder, Mrs. Bronson Howard, Mrs. Lottie Blair Parker, Mrs. H. C. DeMille and Mrs. W. C. DeMille, Henry B. Harris, Herbert Hall Winslow, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Brady (Grace George), Mrs. John Philip Sousa, Edward Sims Van Zile, Edwin Barbour, Selina Fetter Royle, Edmund Breese and a number of others connected with theatrical writing and production.

DISCUSS "THE GREAT DIVIDE."

Playgoers Tackle a Problem Play—Decision Seems to Be a Draw

After a session of song and piano music last night in the ballroom of the Hotel Astor the American Playgoers swapped sentiments on William Vaughn Moody's play, "The Great Divide," and finally by almost unanimous vote decided that they believed in it. The sole dissenter in the voting was a dark young woman, who delivered her negative so unobtrusively that only a few heard it. But there were others who did not vote at all who believe the play is not a dramatic success.

Mr. Andre Tridon was among these. He said that with an accent that was as good as any sentiment he got off that he had invested the "ridiculous sum of $1.50" for a pair of good seats in the first week of the play, and he was disappointed. He decided he would give Moody another chance and last Friday he went to see the play again. By giving up a lot of coin to a speculator he got a "little thing upstairs." He was again disappointed, although he was forced to confess that financially the play was a go.

He decided that, psychologically considered, it was not a thriller. Mr. Tridon thought, in fact, it missed fire every night. It was hypocritical from star to finish. He could not understand the psychology of *Ruth*. She was full of prejudices and shams. She was as ridiculous as a man who went to see "The Great Divide" in a silk hat, which gave him a headache. *Ruth* was as one who had on a silk hat and would not take it off for fear of what New England would think of her. What was her word of honor given under threat to a drunkard and what was the signature of a tipsy Judge that bound her to a beast? Mr. Triton's conclusion was that if "The Great Divide" was a little more human it might be a great American play.

Miss Blanche Eager agreed in a measure with Mr. Triton. She thought the play would make an excellent novel. She looked upon *Ruth* as not a woman, but as a sort of allegory—an effort to depict a Puritan idea in a struggle. But she believed even a Puritan like *Ruth* could not whine for a whole year.

Edward C. Towne, who is a playwright himself, said that he had never seen the play and told a funny story that he had heard in Chicago just after the great fire. John DeWitt Warner refused to talk from the platform because of his modesty, and said he did not understand the second act. Mrs. Emelie Martinez declared she liked the play so much that she had seen it three times. The test of a play's success was the box office. She did not think much of the criticisms on psychological grounds. The play was not psychological, but just human.

Carnation Day, Jan. 29.

The Carnation League of America has sent out a special appeal asking all patriotic men and women to observe the birthday of William McKinley this year by wearing a carnation, the favorite flower of the murdered President. "Carnation Day" comes on January 29, when McKinley would have been 65 years old. This will be the fifth year it has been specially observed. The league was established in 1903 and has among its trustees President Roosevelt, some of the Cabinet officers and United States Senators.

HAPPY FATHERS-IN-LAW.

Col. Cummings and Police Sergeant Walsh Didn't Know It Till Saturday.

Police Sergeant Thomas Walsh of the Eighty-second precinct, Borough Hall, Brooklyn, and Col. Michael J. Cummings, secretary in the Sewer Department, have been fast friends for many years. They both live in the old Sixth ward and their children have grown up together. On Saturday each received a surprise. Stella Walsh got her father in good humor and then told him that she was married.

"Married?" said the sergeant.

"Sure," said she.

"Who's the fellow?"

"Why, Will Cummings."

"Well, Will's a good fellow."

Then she told her father that she and Will went to Jamaica on June 5 last and were married by a priest and that they determined to keep the marriage a secret.

"Well, you kept it all right, all right," said the sergeant, who then started out to find Col. Cummings. When they met the Colonel told Sergt. Walsh that his son had just confessed to him that he had been married.

"It's all right," said Col. Cummings, "and I told Will that he would have to bring Stella to our house."

Horatio Seymour Club Ball.

The annual ball of the Horatio Seymour Club of the Seventh Assembly district will be given Wednesday night at Terrace Garden. The club is the Tammany headquarters of the district, which has seen many factional fights. John C. Sheehan, who was defeated by Frank J. Goodwin, the present leader, is to be at the ball and Charles F. Murphy and most of the district leaders will also attend.

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Fortieth Anniversary of an Orange Church.

ORANGE, N. J., Jan. 20.—The fortieth anniversary of the Central Presbyterian Church, Orange, was observed to-day. The pastor, the Rev. Dr. John Fulton Patterson, and the Rev. David O. Irving of Bethel Presbyterian Church, East Orange, who attended the Central Church when he was a boy, delivered historical addresses. The congregation first worshipped in Central Hall in Main street on December 16, 1866. Three years later the site now occupied by the present brownstone edifice at Main and Prince streets was bought.

The Metropolitan Concert.

The Sunday night concert at the Metropolitan Opera House drew a big audience last night. Geraldine Farrar and Louise Homer were well received. Journet's rendering of the "Toreador" song from Faust was encored. Ricardo, Straociari and Dr. Otto Neitzel, the pianist, completed the list.