

—: THE BLUE BONNET :—

A weekly publication of the ship's company of the U.S.S. Houston, Captain G. N. Barker, U.S.N., Commanding and Commander C. A. Bailey, U.S.N., Executive Officer.

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— Editorial —

Conversation is an art in which a man has all mankind for competition.

— EMERSON —

NAVY men have been stamped from time immemorial as being colossal bores since the only subject of conversation with which they are familiar is the Navy. Now, while we are not disparaging knowledge of your work, there's no use forcing a full enlistment upon friends and relatives, including mothers-in-law. To be sure, they will usually listen politely to your gory tales of the roaring main, take your laughter and ridicule of their ignorance of Naval terms with a wry smile, stifle a yawn of ennui with a fluttering hand, and adroitly attempt to switch the topic of conversation to something else. If their plan is successful and another subject, such as the President's policies, political and military measures in the Japanese conflict, or the European situation, is brought forth for consideration, you are left to flounder in a conversational maelstrom of a type you know nothing of.

If the mountans would not come to Mohammed, Mohammed went to the mountain. If conversation isn't within your tiny, narrow, begoted orbit, you'll have to increase your orbit so as to include more extensive fields. Remember that no matter how important the Navy is, or how important you think it is, it is not the center of the universe about which all must revolve.

When people mention Chiang Kaishek, do you mutter, "yes, he is a Chinese laundryman, isn't he? Now when I was on the Tuscaroara in 29 . . ." Your verbal opponents undoubtedly throw in the towel at this point, settle down with a pained

The Pantless Gunner Of Panay

Commend me to that noble soul
Who, in the battle's heat,
Rushed to his post without his pants,
The bomber's dive to meet;
Who stood upon the rocking deck
In careless disattire,
With shirt tail flaunting in the breeze,
To deal out fire for fire.
Old Glory's color deepened
As she floated o'er this son —
The man who had no time for pants
But plenty for his gun.
Come, name a million heroes,
But to me there'll never be
A finer show of nerve or grit
On any land or sea —
Then dwell upon your epics
Should you feel an urge for chants,
Recall the sinking Panay
And the gunner minus pants!

—Vaun Al Arnold.

The above poem has appeared in most of the ship's papers in the fleet, and we deem it proper that such a ballad should find its way into our Blue Bonnet also. Those of you who saw news reels of the bombing of the Panay will no doubt recall the pantless gunner, as he stood there in his shirt tail, returning the fire.

We're Crazy

There are meters of accent,
There are meters of tone,
But the best way to meter,
Is to meter alone.

There are letters of accent,
There are letters of tone,
But the best way to letter
Is to letter alone.

expression, mentally award you the leather medal for the biggest bore of the century, and vow not to be in the next time you come to call.

Do a little outside reading when you can't make up your mind whether to go ashore or not. The Reader's Digest and similiar publications are strongly recommended as a foundation upon which to place your stores of current events gleaned from daiy persual of the newspapers. Increase your conversational orbit by finding out what is happening in this old world of ours and you'll find that your coming will be heralded instead of bemoaned.

Our Hospital Ships

A brief glance at the history of employment of hospital ships during the past 75 years will reveal that no first-class nation will carry on a major war without employing hospital ships to serve the Fleet.

The United States Navy's floating hospital, U.S.S. Relief, only hospital ship attached to the Fleet, takes care of the sick and injured personnel of the ships of the Navy. The Relief, placed in commission on 28 December, 1920, is the first ship of any navy in the world to be built as a hospital ship, is named after the first Relief, a converted vessel which served as a hospital ship during the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, and the Chinese Boxer Uprising.

The present Relief is 483 feet long, 60 feet wide, has a displacement of 9800 tons, cruising speed of ten knots and a cruising radius of 15,000 miles. Though smaller than the average hospital ashore, it is equipped to handle 360 cases and 500 cases in an emergency.

This is more than the average hospital can handle. No less than ten medical officers, three dental officers, twelve nurses and 118 men of the hospital corps, who act as technical assistants, minister to 2200 patients each year.

About six new patients are received aboard the Relief each day for treatment of everything from broken legs, colds, burns, and aching teeth to the more serious diseases. One or more surgical operations are performed every day; 4417 major and 566 minor operations were performed last year.

Only 3 out of 1000 die, while 20.5 per cent are transferred to shore hospitals and 70.72 per cent recover within 30 days. The Relief has the most modern equipment that is obtainable and is ranked with the leading hospitals of the country.

The Relief is the only ship in the Navy which has women as regular members of the ship's complement. They are members of the Navy Nurse Corps. These nurses are seagoing and travel aboard the Relief as the ship accompanies the Fleet. The tour of duty aboard the hospital ship is very desirable and for one year only.