respond so quickly and eagerly to the S.O.S. wireless call for help. An unwritten law compels them to succor a fellow seaman in distress even at the risk of their own destruction, and it stirs the blood of all humanity to read of ships like the *Seminole,* tossed upon a raging sea, yet standing by a sinking ship until every man is rescued from the jaws of death.

During the past decade the President of the United States has annually designated vessels of the Revenue-Cutter Service to patrol actively the Atlantic coast during the winter months for the purpose of rendering aid to distressed merchant craft. The patrol extends from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico and has numbered as many as ten cutters. From the first day of December of each year to the first day of April following, the patrolling force is constantly cruising.

The littoral lying between Cape Hatteras and Charleston has for several years constituted the station of the revenue-cutter *Seminole.* Measured between lightships, or over the course usually followed by coasting steamers, the distance between the northern and southern extremities of this station is 270 nautical miles. This stretch of coast during the winter months is noted for the disasters which occur to shipping. The *Seminole's* record for the winter season of 1912-13 is typical. During the four months from December 1, 1912, to April 1, 1913, the cutter assisted, in all, nine craft, comprising both steamers and sailing vessels, and representing a value of floating property of $993,000, a cargo value of $573,000, or a total vessel-and-cargo valuation of $1,566,000. A tenth vessel, the *Savannah,* a dangerous derelict, was destroyed with a mine.

About six weeks before a recent season's winter cruising commenced, the *Seminole* made a run of over 100 miles in a northeast gale to the burning steamship *Berkshire,* of the Merchants and Miner's Line, took off the passengers, put out the fire, and saved both vessel and cargo from total loss—representing for cargo and vessel fully $500,000.

It may be asked why private wrecking craft are not available to render some of the service performed by the cutters. The fact is that they are not in evidence. Nor can private enterprise hope to cope with a government service in which there is high *esprit de corps* such as characterizes the Revenue-Cutter Service. Risks and hazards are cheerfully assumed by the Revenue-Cutter Service, the sole object to be attained being relief for the distressed and the performance of duty.

CAPE FEAR LIFE-SAVING SERVICE.[1]

A public service which measures its efficiency by the number of human lives saved from the perils of the sea is to be classed among the highest humanities of a great government.

Through the courtesy of its general superintendent, the Hon. S. I. Kimball, I have obtained the following information with particular reference to the Life-Saving Service in the neighborhood of Cape Fear.

The equipment of the Cape Fear and Oak Island Stations, which are located in the vicinity of Cape Fear, consists of apparatus, including line-throwing guns, projectiles, lines, beach lights, signaling devices, and power boats, as well as other boats. The Cape Fear Station has a Beebe-McLellan self-bailing surfboat, an open Beebe surfboat, and a Beebe-McLellan self-bailing power surfboat, with horizontal engine; and the Oak Island Station is equipped with a Beebe-McLellan self-bailing surfboat and a 36-foot self-righting and self-bailing power lifeboat. The Beebe-McLellan self-bailing power surfboat and the 36-foot self-righting and self-bailing power lifeboat are the latest developments in power life-saving boats, and are as good as any in the world. A constant watch is kept from the lookout towers of the stations and a beach patrol is maintained at night, and during the day when the weather is thick or stormy.

The recent instances of service at wrecks by the Cape Fear and Oak Island Life-Saving Stations have been as follows:

On December 8, 1912, the steamer *Aloha,* tonnage 42, value $15,000, with four persons on board, was rendered assistance by the Life-Saving Station at Oak Island; also on December 16, 1912, the schooner *Dohemo,* value $7,500, with two persons on board, and in the same day, the launch *Anerida II.,* value $1,700, with two persons on board, was saved.

On December 27, 1912, the schooner *Savannah,* tonnage 584, value $44,000, which was a total loss, with nine persons on board, and on March 26, 1913, the British steamer *Strathardle,* tonnage 4,377, value $120,000, with thirty-three persons on board, were rendered assistance by the Life-Saving Stations at Cape Fear and Oak Island.

On October 10, 1913, the schooner *John Twohy,* tonnage

[1]See Note on Revenue-Cutter Service, page 525.