LIFE SAVERS

Thrilling Work of the Guardians of Uncle Sam's Dangerous Coasts.

ABOUT 2,000 men are now being pressed at their hardest at the various life saving stations which line the Atlantic coast of the United States from Quoddy head, Maine, to Biscayne bay, Florida; the gulf coast from the southern point of the Florida peninsula to Brazos, Tex.; the coasts of California, Oregon, Washington and Alaska and also the shores of the great lakes.

The winter months produce more wrecks than the rest of the year, but these men take up the work of saving lives and property with cheerfulness and make the United States life saving service what it is—one of the greatest and most perfectly organized bodies of men in the world.

Scattered along the entire coast are these little stations, approximately four miles apart and each manned by a crew of six surfmen and their captain or keeper, as he is officially known. Each man before enlisting for the active season has been compelled to pass a searching physical examination before surgeons of the marine hospital, and if not declared fit and able for the arduous duties that will be his he is not allowed to enlist, and a man is then chosen from the list of applicants for that district to fill the vacancy.

On the first minute that marks the first day of August one of these men will start from each of these stations and commence the first patrol of the beach, a patrol that will never cease from that time to the 30th of the following May. Their vigilant eyes will never cease scanning the ocean in darkness or fog for signs of vessels in distress, and their Coston signals will flash a warning to the careless skipper who is nearing the shoals and bars that mark the dead line of navigation.

Salaries of Life Savers.

The coasts are divided into thirteen districts, each in charge of a superintendent, who lives in the district, and all under the supervision of General Superintendent Sumner I. Kimball, whose office is located at Washington. Each station has a keeper, who lives in the station the entire year, six men who ship for ten months and a seventh, or winter man, who is on duty for five months. The keepers receive a salary of $900 a year and the men $65 per month. Out of this they all have to pay their proportionate share of the station mess, buy dress uniforms and working clothes of white duck and also boots and oilskins.

Regular days are provided for drilling with the beach apparatus, which consists of the Lyle gun and breeches buoy, the surfboat, the wigwag and international code of signals and the method of restoring the apparently drowned. Of course during the winter months when the ground is covered with snow the beach apparatus drill is not always performed, and the same may be said of drilling with the surfboat in exceptionally high seas when the men would risk their lives needlessly. This is all left to the discretion of the keeper, who must enter on his journal the reasons for not holding such drill. The journal also shows the condition of the barometer, thermometer, direction and force of the wind and condition of the surf at midnight, sunrise, noon and sunset. A copy of this journal is sent to the district superintendent each week and after being examined by him is forwarded to the general superintendent.

The patrol of the beach is kept with systematic regularity. The night is divided into watches from sunset to sunrise, four watches in the winter months and three in the early fall and spring. Each surfman knows when he has to go on duty, and his time is so divided that he stands one patrol and one station watch each night.

Nothing more interesting than the work of the life savers at a wreck can be imagined. To see them rush the surfboat from the station to the shore and launch it in the face of a thundering surf is nothing less than thrilling.

If the men find it impossible to launch the boat the keeper decides to attempt to reach the wreck with the shot line. You watch the adjustment of the Lyle gun, the careful sighting by the keeper, and when the discharge startles you your breath is held while your eyes follow the flight of the projectile with its tail of rope streaming out behind. A gasp of satisfaction is given when it is seen to pass directly over the wrecked ship, and a moment after the sailors are seen hauling in the line, not as large as your little finger, which means life to them.

Two other lines are successively hauled on board, each larger than the preceding one, and the end of the largest is securely fastened to the mast. The breeches buoy is then rigged up and the work of landing the shipwrecked crew begins.

Probably Long Island has been the graveyard of more ships than any other stretch of beach in the United States of the same dimensions.

There has not a winter passed in many years when one or more disastrous wrecks have not occurred, and there is no busier body of men in the service than those located on the island.

A Daring Rescue.

Any one who would tell the stories of the American life savers will always find an embarrassment of riches in the abundance of material to be had, but there is little difficulty in deciding which of the heroes of the surf displayed the most remarkable agility, strength and courage combined when earning the gold medals with which they are decorated, for there is one story so remarkable that it would be beyond belief if told in fiction, and the more one knows about the perils of the surf the more incredible such a story would seem to him.

At 2:15 o'clock in the morning on Monday, Feb. 22, 1904, the three masted schooner Benjamin C. Cromwell stranded in a southeast gale on the sand bar that lies 500 yards off shore, a quarter of a mile east of the Bellport life saving station on Long Island. She was loaded with lumber, a part of the cargo being on deck, as usual. The night patrol from the station promptly discovered the wreck, and the crews from their stations of life savers were soon gathered on the beach. Several lines were fired across the wreck, but the sailors were so badly used up that they were unable to haul up the breeches buoy apparatus. The life savers then launched a surfboat, and it was manned by nine men picked for their strength and skill with the oars, but the surf threw the boat back on the sand. And then before the boat could be placed for another trial the masts of the schooner fell over the rail, and the hull was knocked into a thousand pieces, which, with the cargo of lumber, soon covered the waves with masses of debris that were hurled to and fro and ground together with a fury that is indescribable.

Life Savers at Work.

In the midst of this wreckage seven men were seen. One was on the cabin top, and the others were clinging to a piece of the broken hull. The seas were breaking over all of them at intervals, and the timbers and planks afloat roundabout seemed to be literally clawing at them to drag them into the water. Four of the men on the broken piece of hull were soon knocked away from it and crushed alongside or drowned. The same fate was hanging over the three that remained in view when Surfman Frank Raynor kicked off his boots, stripped himself to his underwear, plunged into the surf, climbed up on the first mass of wreckage he reached and then, leaping from timber to timber, made his way toward the man on the cabin top. An instant later Surfman Albert Latham followed. Both men were repeatedly knocked down and thrown into the water between the masses of wreckage, but they struggled to their feet again and leaped on until they brought the sailor from the cabin top and one from the broken piece of the hull in safety to the beach. The third man was knocked into the surf and drowned before they could reach him.

General Superintendent Sumner I. Kimball of the United States life saving service when asked if there was any one incident among the many stories of wrecks and rescues that had come to him that remained especially prominent in his mind replied promptly:

"Yes. The story of the schooner Goodman, wrecked at Cape Hatteras, shows the spirit of the service better than any other in the records."

To appreciate fully the story of this wreck one must know something of the locality where she was lost. Cape Hatteras is a tongue of sand that reaches seven miles out under the water as if in search of wrecks. It has been formed by two currents, one from the north and one from the southwest, that meet and unite to run out to sea. Waves as well as currents meet across this point, and on a still day, with the water oil smooth, the spray is thrown twenty feet into the air when two waves come togethere there. When a storm is raging the currents increase in speed and power as the waves grow, and because of the varying channels among the offshore reefs cross currents are set up. Therefore with every gale there is a chaos of waters off this cape from which no ship, once caught, has ever escaped. Ships grounded on the Diamond reefs, as the shoals are called, are torn and ripped as well as pounded to pieces, and it is a dread fact that the current always carries every floating piece of a wreck out to sea. The records kept at the lighthouse show that only one man has ever come ashore on a piece of wreckage from a vessel stranded on the Diamond reefs.

The Schooner A. B. Goodman.

The schooner A. B. Goodman was working her way up the coast against a northwest gale, and to take advantage of such shelter as the land afforded she kept as close in on the beach as possible. The tide was flowing up, and it helped her along until she was foolishly headed into a channel across the reef. There a cross current flung her on the nearest shoal at a point where the opposing wind and currents at times heaped the water on and above her deck halfway to the crosstrees. The crew escaped to the rigging, but even when they had climbed to a point where the waves could not reach them they had still no reason to hope for rescue, for the schooner was stranded at a spot from which no vessel or crew had ever escaped.

The crew of the life saving station on the beach saw the schooner strike. They at once dragged their surfboat from the station, but when they had pointed it down the sand they paused. As they looked at the waves crashing over the deck of the stranded vessel every man became convinced that the surfboat would be torn to pieces as soon as she was driven near the wreck. But they did not stop in their work of dragging their boat to the water through fear or because of any doubt about what they were to do. On the contrary, the manifest danger was to them an additional incentive to go forward. But, believing that his boat would be destroyed, Keeper Benjamin Dailey ordered Surfman Bassett to remain on the beach in order to give aid to any one who might force a way through the surf, and then each of the others made his last will and testament orally—each told Bassett what the wife and little ones were to have and do in case they, as well as the boat, were lost.

This done, they launched their boat, and in spite of peril they brought the sailors safely away before the wreck broke up, for it was not in men of that mental equipment to fail.

When Dailey was asked later why he took such a risk, especially when he and his men had families depending on them, he replied:

"Why, we knew it was our duty to do what we could, so we did it."

The Prinzess Irene.

One of the most noteworthy near disasters in recent years was when the Prinzess Irene, the big ocean going passenger carrying steamer, went aground on a sandbar at 7:30 o'clock in the morning of April 6, 1911, on Fire island beach during a heavy fog. She carried 235 cabin and 1,485 steerage passengers. Captain Goddart and his life saving crew of the Lone Hill station after repeated attempts succeeded in reaching the vessel about 9 o'clock. She was only 300 feet off shore, but the sea was tremendously rough. Captain Goddart discovered that there was no immediate danger threatening the ship, but he stood by to render whatever expert assistance needed.

About two days later the Prinz Frederich Wilhelm, the sister ship of the stranded steamer, arrived, and in less than five hours the 1,720 passengers were transferred from one liner to the other without mishap.

A World Chase To Snare Cupid

By CHARLOTTE MORTON

LE ROY REMINGTON was a young globe trotter. He had no idea that he was going to and fro on the earth hunting for something, but he was. All men from the time they are old enough to marry are hunting for wives, and all women from a similar period of their lives are hunting for husbands. Tell most of them this, and they will either laugh or get angry at you. Nevertheless the statement is true. Nature often fools us, but she never relaxes the enforcement of her laws.

As I was saying, Le Roy Remington was crossing continents and oceans, as he thought, to get rid of being bored. Had he been obliged to work for a living he would not have been bored so much. Had he been married he would not have been bored at all. He might have suffered under many irritations and annoyances, he might even have wished for a return of the freedom of bachelorhood, but he would not have been bored. Boredom does not usually belong to the married state.

One day Remington was crossing "the plains" of America somewhere between Omaha and San Francisco when the train stopped. The weather was warm, and the windows were open. A train from the opposite direction came rolling along with diminishing speed. It brought the girl Remington was looking for and stopped with her directly beside his window. Her window, too, was raised, and the two sat face to face within a few feet of each other. Remington looked at the girl, and the girl looked at Remington. He made the most of the brief time allotted him. The girl lowered her eyes. Then there was a toot-toot ahead, and Remington's train moved onward.

Remington was looking for this very girl, but he didn't know it till he was on the Pacific ocean midway between San Francisco and Hongkong.

By the time he stood again on dry land he had made up his mind that he must find the girl on the other side of the globe.

He went to Paris and from Paris started for London. On a railway train some twenty miles west of Paris, while stopping at a station, a train pulled past, and at a window in this train was the girl he had discovered he wanted.

It took Remington just thirty seconds to gather up his belongings and leave the train. During this brief interval it had occurred to him that the girl might be going around the world and he had better proceed westward in the hope of meeting her once more and at a standstill. But he dismissed the idea as ridiculous.

The train that had passed was bound for Paris, and Remington took the next one for the same place. His trunk went on to London. But he cared nothing for that. He could buy trunks and their contents, but he couldn't buy the girl who was going to Paris, though he could buy any one of dozens of other girls. She was surely going to Paris. All Americans who are approaching Paris are going there. And ten to one she would stay awhile there. So Remington returned to Paris and when he got there hunted through the registers of the hotels where Americans were accustomed to stay. At the Hotel Meurice he found the names "Mr. and Mrs. Edgar D. Avery, San Francisco, Cal., U. S. A., and Miss Edith Avery." The clerk told him that they had arrived at a time that corresponded with the arrival of the train on which he had seen the girl he was hunting.

While he was racking his brains how to secure an introduction he chanced to meet his intimate friend Philpot. He asked Philpot to dine with him the same evening, intending to talk the matter over with him. No; Philpot's friends, the Averys of San Francisco, had just arrived and he was engaged to drive with them. What luck! Would Philpot introduce him? Certainly! He would make an engagement to take him to call. They parted, and the next morning Philpot told Remington that he had made the engagement for five days ahead, the first evening the Averys were disengaged. Remington passed five weary, waiting days and on the afternoon of the fifth received a note from Philpot to say that the Averys had left Paris unexpectedly the day before.

Remington was crushed. He found Philpot, only to learn that the Averys had gone eastward to Hongkong to sail for San Francisco immediately on arrival at that port. Remington inquired the date of sailing of the steamer they would likely take and found he would not have time to reach it himself. He could go westward and reach San Francisco earlier than the party going eastward.

He left Paris that night for Southampton, caught an outgoing steamer and reached New York in six days. In two weeks from his leaving France he was in San Francisco waiting the arrival of the girl he was chasing. Whenever a steamer arrived from the east he was at the dock watching. At last he saw Miss Avery coming down a gangplank. That was enough for the present. He waited for a reasonable time for the family to get settled, then called.

Six months later Remington and his bride were traveling from San Francisco to New York on their wedding trip. At a station on the road the train stopped, and Remington for the first time informed Mrs. Edith Avery Remington of how he had met the woman he had wanted for his wife at that very station and had chased her around the globe.

Famous Tree Dies.

The famous chestnut tree Du Vingt Mars in the Tuileries gardens of Paris, famous because it was always the first of the year to burst into bloom, is dead. Strange to say, it will not be cut down, but fenced in, and this will be done in regard especially to the tradition which has it that the poor Swiss soldiers who died in heroic defense of the French monarchs on Aug. 10, 1792, lie buried at its foot.

What the Jokesmiths Have to Say

Obstacle to Independence.

"A woman can be just as self reliant and independent as a man," said Mr. Meekton's wife defiantly.

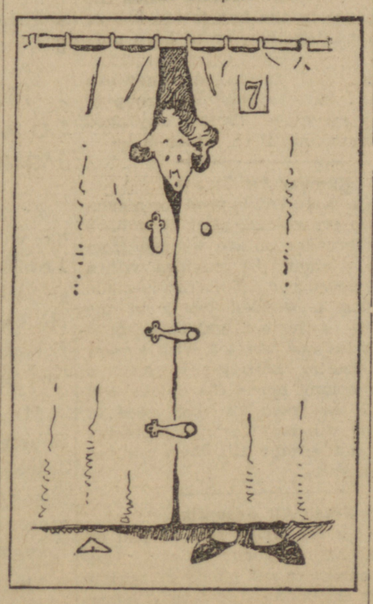
"Mebbe she can, Henrietta, mebbe she can, but not while she wears dresses that hook up the back."—Washington Star.

Peep Into the Future.

First Woman—Men are getting into everything nowadays.

Second Woman—Yes; I sat near to one at the hair pulling fight at the garden last night, though, of course, he was disguised as a woman.—Puck.

In the Sleeper.



Voice (from the upper berth)—I just knew there was a man under my bed!—Bohemian Magazine.

A Crabbed Pessimist.

"Papa, is there such a thing as a reform cooking school?"

"I doubt it, Johnny. If there is it hasn't any pupils."—Chicago Tribune.

Making Ends Meet.

First Rounder—Say, old man, you are going the pace that kills. You are burning the candle at both ends.

Second Rounder—That is true. That is the only way I can make both ends meet.—New York Mail.

Of Course Nobody Did.

Mrs. Moffett of the Cherryvale Journal writes:

"The new eight dollar corsets which incase one to the knees are often responsible for embarrassing their wearers. The other day at a card party a fat lady dropped a card. She made several ineffectual dives trying to pick it up. Finally with a purple face she gasped out:

"'Will somebody wearing a dollar corset kindly pick up that card for me?'"—Kansas City Star.

Never Too Soon.

Cholly—I've—aw—always had a horror, Miss Maudie, of premature burial—being buried too soon, y'know.

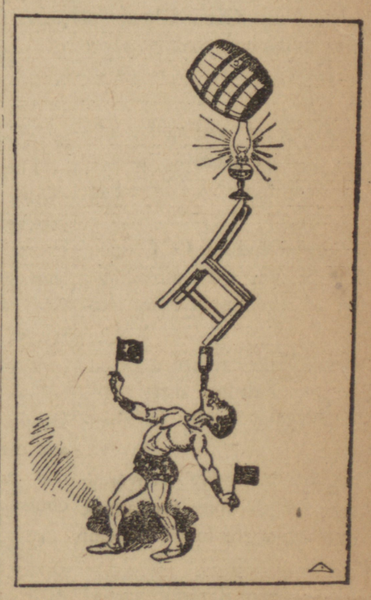
Maudie—Oh, nonsense! That's impossible!

Deserted In Time of Need.

A young candidate was preaching at great length in a country church. Amid yawns and stifled sighs the congregation gradually faded away one by one. Finally only the sexton was left, but the preacher still preached on, being only at his "thirdly" and of a stubborn disposition.

The sexton at last could stand it no longer, and, going softly up to the desk, he whispered, "When ye're through turn out the lights, lock the door and put the key under the mat."—National Monthly.

Uplift.



A Pleasant Change.

"You seem to enjoy taking your wife to the theater."

"Yes," replied Mr. Meekton. "It interests me immensely to see Henrietta sitting absolutely quiet while a lot of other people are doing all the talking."—Washington Star.