



FATHER NEPTUNE AND NAVY.
Weird Ceremonies that Are Encoun-
tered While Crossing Equator.

When a ship of the American navy crosses the equator there is always a fitting ceremony performed. The older men of the navy, who have crossed the line before, take it upon themselves to initiate the "rookies" of the ship's company into the solemn mysteries of the "Domain of Neptune Rex."

Since the earliest days of the American navy this tradition has been handed down, and the practice is as much in vogue to-day as it ever was.

Every provision for the reception of "Neptune Rex" and his followers is made the day before the equator is reached, and as the costumes are prepared (secretly) and the large tank constructed on the fore-castle—where ugly bears and sea-serpents are wont to lie in waiting for land-lubbers—crowds of new arrivals on board can be seen huddled together, conversing in low tones of the mysteries for the morrow. At evening quarters every man is handed a summons to appear before "His Majesty's Scribe" and to accept most heartily, and with good grace, the pains and penalties that will be

inflicted upon him that he may become an honored "Shellback."

"Neptune's Messenger" hails the ship from afar the following morning. He is assured that the ship is ready for the king, and that "His Majesty" is invited to inspect her officers and crew. From some unknown nook or corner the "Royal" visitor and his assistants appear on the quarterdeck. The party is conducted to the fore-castle, where the bears, pollywogs and sea-serpents of every kind are waiting. The scribe produces the names of those members of the ship's company who have not yet been initiated into the "Order of the Deen" or the "Order of Neptune Rex."

"Neptune," accompanied by his loyal wife, "Amphitrite," takes his seat in the royal chair overlooking the tank and operations. The first name is called; the man answers, (if he does not a royal policeman will be sent after him), the court judges pass sentence upon his carcass, and the fun begins. The trusty "Shellbacks," who have crossed the line, and who have been accepted by his "Royal Highness" as fit "subjects," station themselves at points of vantage overlooking the ceremonies.

The "Royal Barber" shaves and otherwise trims the "rookie," and

then he is passed on to the "Royal Doctor," given a pill of tar that would choke an ox, treated to an electric cure for insomnia, rubbed with an ointment of molasses, glue and paste, the victim then appears before many other "members of the court," and lastly is seated in the "Chair of Honor." Here he gets an electric shock and afterwards is literally dumped into the water at the mercy of the sea-serpents. Needless to mention, the inhabitants of this mysterious body of water perform their duties as only experienced shellbacks can.

There are no members of the crew excepted; all of them, officers and enlisted men alike, who have not or cannot show a certificate signed and sealed by the "Royal Scribe or His Majesty," must suffer the same fate. In the days when the navy was "wet" officers were sometimes shown a little leniency if they would agree to "splice the main brace" after the ceremony was over, and after "Neptune and his Court" had left for "regions unknown."

In one known instance a lieutenant was directed to shine the "royal coffee pot." An ensign spent an hour shining the shoes of "Neptune" and his pretty "Amphitrite," and still another officer was ordered to be more liberal in giving shore leave to his division.

Every man initiated is given a "Neptune Certificate" to prove that he is an "Honored Shellback," and he is never again expected to present himself for the ceremony. The certificate in question is a very stately-looking document, done in colors and signed by the "King," sealed by the "Royal Secretary" and handed to the man the following day.

Every man who has crossed the equator on an American man-of-war can tell you, first-hand, who "Neptune Rex, the Ruler of the Raging Main," is, and he can also recall at a glance the signature of "Davy Jones, His Majesty's Scribe."

If, perchance, mistakes are made in purchasing, lower the price at once and clear the merchandise without delay.

And, now that we are on the subject of quick selling and rapid turnover, let me say a few words about the great force that makes quick selling possible—ADVERTISING! I find that some merchants do not like the picture that the word advertising brings up. When you mention that word they have visions of forced sales, sacrificed profits, big bills from newspapers, and a general feeling like "the morning after."

When you find a merchant who feels like that about it, go and look at some of the advertising he has put out. Read some of the statements he has expected the public to believe and respond to. I venture to say you do not have to search far to find the true reason for the headache. Advertising has been horribly misused. In many instances it has carried thoughts and words that a merchant would not dare to pass out to his customers over the counter. It has been looked upon as a means of framing up cheap tricks, with the idea that the public believes everything that is seen in print. It has failed, and it has deserved to fail.

On the other hand, there is another kind of advertising that has no force because it says nothing. A merchant goes to the markets and spends days in selecting new and attractive goods, with all sorts of selling features that have appealed to him when buying them. Does he put these attractive features into his advertising? Does he tell convincingly just why the values are so astonishingly good, the styles so striking and attractive? He does not. He buys a quarter-page of space in which to say something as dry as dust—something that does not create a ripple of excitement after it

is read, if, indeed, anyone reads it at all. This is a sample of the usual stock statement:

"Our buyers have just returned from the Northern markets with a full line of the new spring merchandise. Your inspection is invited."

"John Smith & Co."

That, my friends, is not advertising at all in the modern sense of the word. It is merely a contribution to the support of your local newspaper. It should go down in your ledger in the column reserved for charitable contributions; it should not be charged to advertising because it is not advertising.

Advertising is news. It should carry the same human interest appeal that causes people to buy and read a newspaper. If you can get that something into your advertising which will instruct and interest the people—tell them something about the goods and market conditions, service, style features—real news about the things they need and want to buy—you won't have to beg or force them to read. They will read out of pure self-interest and come into the store anxious to buy your goods. The right kind of advertising is a real service to your customers, because it tells them things they really want to know. Advertising is service. "He profits most who serves best."

In connection with this subject I must say a word about tying up your window displays with newspaper advertising. When you feature new goods or special values in your newspaper ad, always arrange a window display of the goods, so that the two sales-forces will work together. If the price is the attractive feature, put a price card on the article displayed in the window. Post several of your newspaper ads, about the store where clerks and customers can see them. Always be sure that your clerks know what you are advertising. Have the advertised articles prominently displayed in the store and easy to get at.

In reaching up for the goal of quick turn-over we must not overlook the possibilities contained in our selling organization. Every customer who comes into the store is a prospect for other merchandise than that which has brought him in. The bright clerk will size up a customer's possibilities at a glance and stimulate desire by showing new things in which he has reason to believe the customer will be interested. Take the trouble to teach your clerks salesmanship; it will stimulate your own ability along that line.

Have your clerks study the goods they sell; let them be in a position to answer any question a customer may ask. That creates confidence and strengthens the customer's desire to buy. Nothing is so appalling as ignorance of merchandise on the part of a salesman. On being shown two grades of neckwear, one at 50c, and one at \$1.00, a customer said: "Yes, they are both very pretty, but what is the difference?" "The difference—the difference?" said the clerk. "Why, the difference is just 50 cents." That bit of salesmanship was not calculated to sell the \$1.00 tie.

Be timely in exploiting your merchandise. Keep your eye on the social calendar in the newspapers, the club meetings, the births, deaths, weather reports and goings and comings of the people. Thus you will be in a position to take advantage of fleeting merchandising opportunities that your competitors may overlook. Being ready to supply a pressing need is a sure way to build permanent business through service.

Bear in mind constantly that the dollars in 1921 are going to him who reaches out for them through the sound inducements of value and service. It will be a hard year for mossbacks and those who cannot get in tune with present-day conditions. It will bring a lean cash drawer to those still waiting for the return of the silk shirt days of 1919 and 1920, but it will be a glorious year of opportunity for those who are up and doing six days in the week. The year 1921 is going to prove what kind of a merchant you are—1921 will reward fighters.

Mother

Give Sick, Bilious Child
"California Fig Syrup"

"California Syrup of Figs" is the best "laxative physic" to give to a sick, feverish child who is bilious or constipated. Directions for babies and children on bottle. They love its fruity taste. Beware! Say "California" or you may not get the genuine recommended by physicians for over thirty years. Don't risk injuring your child's tender stomach, liver and bowels by accepting an imitation fig syrup. Insist upon "California."—ad

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The Willard is better built,
The Willard lives longer,
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AS OTHERS SEE MR. WILSON.
Paris Papers Gave Expression to
Views on the Subject.

The newspapers of Paris, of all shades of political opinion, devoted not a little space to comment on the change of administration at Washington on March 4th, and in this comment President Wilson's departure from the seat at the head of the government is given more prominence than is allotted to speculation on the ascendancy of President Harding. The Temps says:

"President Wilson is an apostle; he believes in principles as one believes in God. He has failed in his noble effort, as all are bound to fail in an effort to put a noble act above human nature as it is constituted. "Woodrow Wilson will remain, however, as a man who understood that young America's place was at the side of the Allies, and who dared to unsheathe the sword to defend right and liberty. For this alone he will remain forever in history as a great American."

La Victoire says:
"President Wilson leaves the White House less triumphantly than when he entered it four years ago. There is a tragic grandeur in the political and physical collapse of a man who two years ago was the moral dictator of the Allied nations."

The Radical, which represents the Left Center party, says:
"History has rendered justice to Washington and Lincoln; we do not doubt that it will place Wilson among the best servants of the United States. The work of Wilson was worthy that of Washington and Lincoln."

Piles Cured in 6 to 14 Days
Druggists refund money if PAZO OINTMENT fails to cure itching, blind, bleeding or protruding piles. Instantly relieves itching Piles, and you can get restful sleep after the first application. Price 60c.

Aged Rector Resigns.
Charleston, March 9.—Rev. John Kershaw, D. D., for over 25 years rector of St. Michael's church, has tendered his resignation because of ill health. Dr. and Mrs. Kershaw are now visiting their son at North Augusta. Under advice of his physician, Dr. Kershaw will need a long rest to restore his health. The vestry of St. Michael's has accepted his resignation with deep regret that his physical condition makes his withdrawal from active duties as rector necessary. No arrangements have as yet been made for filling his place.

WOMEN MAY VOTE—NO POLL.
The New Law Does Not Carry Provi-
sion for Tax is General Opinion.

(The State, March 10.)
Women of South Carolina will not be subject to poll tax in the coming years because of their participation in elections and primaries in South Carolina, according to the opinion of a number of lawyers. The bill passed by the last Legislature gives women equal rights in all elections, but does not refer to poll tax or any tax, merely placing the constitutional requirements on them the same as on men.

The constitution says that a voter must have paid "all taxes," including poll tax, before being allowed to participate in a general election. The section in regard to the voting uses the word "him" in all instances and never mentions "her."

Attorney General Wolfe has already held that the women will not be subject to the tax and reiterated his former statement when asked about the matter yesterday. The Federal constitution gives women the right to vote in all general elections, and the recent law here gives them primary rights equal to those of men. The Sapp bill, passed, ratified and now law, giving the women this primary right, is as follows:

"To confer upon women the right to vote in all elections. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

"Sec. 1. That hereafter all women who have attained the age of 21 years and upward shall have and enjoy all the rights and privileges of qualified electors, upon complying with all the provisions of the constitution defining the right of qualified electors for men, and shall be entitled to vote as such electors, when so qualified, in all elections hereafter held in the State: Provided, that disqualifications of the constitution now applying to men shall also apply to women."

The ancient Greeks are known to have played on bagpipes.

Palmafesta
(PALMETTO STATE FESTIVAL.)
Columbia, March 28 to April 2

Sound Advice to Retailers by

**F. B. Shackelford Points Out Constructive Sales
Building Program in Address to Rock Hill
Chamber of Commerce.**

The following address was delivered recently before the Retail Merchants' Bureau of the Rock Hill Chamber of Commerce and is reproduced from the Rock Hill Herald:

Business conditions are in a constant state of change and evolution. The mind of the buying public changes with the change of conditions. Last year we merchants worried ourselves trying to find goods elaborate and expensive enough to meet the public taste; there was a demand for everything we could secure. It was a seller's market.

To-day we are confronted with an exactly opposite set of conditions. Sales must be forced—unusual values offered to coax the shy dollar from its retirement. It's a buyer's market.

The Rotarians have a slogan which says, "He profits most who serves best," and with a buyer's market ahead of us for 1921, it will be well for the retailers to keep those words in mind.

What sort of service will force business ahead in 1921? Are we going to meet the demand for lower prices by lowering the standard of merchandising? I think not. Our customers have had a taste of the best, and they are not going to be satisfied with inferior goods. A taste for the luxuries remains, even though the purchasing power has been reduced.

How, then, shall we meet these conditions?

Lower wholesale prices are, of course, going to help some and give

us greater merchandise values to offer than we have had for several years. But we are going to go deeper than that into the matter of service, and trim our margins of profit very close if we are intending to forge ahead.

With overhead expense still high, how are we going to offset the loss of close-trimmed profit margins? There is but one answer to that question: Increased volume of sales and quicker turn-over, and buy to-day, sell to-morrow, and buy again next day. That will keep stocks clean and allow us to take advantage of falling markets. If some of us had pursued that policy in 1920 we would have put in less sleepless nights when prices began to hit the toboggan and we were loaded with goods bought at the high peak figures.

I sometimes think that merchants have not got deep enough into the study of turn-over; they have paid little or no attention to the length of time merchandise has been in the house. They have bought and stored away goods until such time as money became an urgent need to meet obligations, then they have sold madly and furiously, without considering cost. A store should be like a city water main—there should be a constant flow of goods from the back door through to the front. When merchandise is selected with care, when due thought is given to the demands of your class of trade, when buying is done conservatively and discounts taken, there is no reason for goods remaining in the house.