

THE WHITE FLAG.

Significance in War as Once Fixed by International Law.

To a great many people the mere mention of a white flag in war at once suggests some connection with one of those unpleasant episodes which, in South Africa, says the London Tit-Bits, came to be dignified with the title of regrettable incidents.

But it is important that it should be more generally known that a white flag in international law possesses a significance quite different in character.

For an officer or soldier to display a white flag or other token of surrender in the presence of the enemy is a disgrace equivalent to showing the white feather; and the king's regulations make it unmistakably clear that the offender will be tried by general courtmartial.

The surrender by an officer charged with its defense, of any garrison, post, guard or position, whether fortified or not, which even a detachment may be ordered to hold, can only be justified by the utmost necessity.

Unless this necessity be clearly shown, the surrender becomes an act of shame and disgrace, punishable by death; or if the evidence is insufficient to support such a charge the offender, if an officer, is liable to be cashiered, or if a soldier to suffer imprisonment.

What requires to be clearly understood is that the hoisting of a white flag means, in itself, nothing else than that one party is asking whether it will receive a communication from the other.

In practice, however, the white flag, in consequence of being improperly hoisted in the course of an action by individual soldiers or small parties, has come to indicate surrender.

The white flag is the universally understood flag of truce, and no more. Since time immemorial it has been used as a signal by an armed force that it is anxious to communicate with the enemy, and this is the only significance that it can be said to possess in international law.

Great vigilance is always necessary, for the question in every case is whether the hoisting of the white flag was authorized by the senior officer.

In consequence, when the flag is hoisted the enemy need not necessarily cease fire, though it is absolutely incumbent on the party which hoists the flag to do so.

For instance, during the siege of Port Arthur in 1900, when a particular fort hoisted a flag, the Japanese general, Baron Nogi, did not immediately cease firing on that fort; he looked upon it as merely the preliminary to a negotiation.

Feeding Our Sailors.

It costs the United States 25 cents to feed a soldier one day and 37 cents to feed a sailor one day. The difference arises largely from the government's efforts to attract men to the navy. The old-time sailor was notoriously ill fed. In the days of wooden ships, with no provision for keeping meat fresh, "salt horse" was as often as not about the only kind of meat a sailor received from one shore leave to another. Black coffee and hardtack usually made up the rest of the meal, though sometimes the menu was varied by the introduction of scouse, lobscouse, skillogalee and other fillers which tasted no better than the regular diet, but were welcomed as a change. After six months of this diet it naturally followed that there was some complaint. Sailors home on leave or out of the service regaled their friends with stories of how the Government starved its sailors, and the impression grew that while the army was not a bad career for a young man, he had better avoid the navy. It was much better to spend a life at hard labor ashore, where good food was available, than to join the navy and retire with a comfortable pension but no appetite.

But this day has long passed. In calling attention to the work which Admiral McGowan, chief of the bureau of supplies and accounts is doing toward providing the sailors in the American navy with food which will keep them in a contented frame of mind, the New York Sun says: "It is not overstating the case to say that the major part of the fleet's efficiency and the contentment of the men is due either directly or indirectly to the generous and varied provender which is now given to them, whether the ship be in port or ploughing her way through stormy seas." Canned goods are still extensively used in the navy. Admiral McGowan says that canned corn beef is so well understood and so well liked in the navy that its use to a certain moderate extent is not only welcome but most welcome to the men—they like it. Canned fruits and vegetables are also used in considerable quantities, but the refrigerating plants which are a part of every modern battleship make it possible to make fresh meats, vegetables and fruits the principal part of the mod-

CAUSTIC COMMENT.

Pointed Paragraphs Concerning Various Things.

When money is tight a man should keep sober.

Shiftless people are never the ones who worry about it.

The chap who suspects his neighbor, is not above suspicion.

A man who patronizes saloons often finds himself in a tight place.

A girl who has loved and lost boasts of her indifference for the men.

The world has but little use for the man who tells it a disagreeable truth.

Poetry may bring returns—if a stamp is inclosed with it.

When an office holder loses his grip he does less handshaking.

A small boy's ideal hero is a big boy who runs away from school.

Happiness is always where we find it, but seldom where we go to seek it.

Sometimes a man gets tired of being good and experiments in vice out of curiosity.

If all women were mind readers every man on earth would take to the tall timber.

The man who likes to hear himself talk is about the only one who cares to listen.

Occasionally a man takes a day off to celebrate the anniversary of his birth, but a woman usually takes a year off.

It is reported that fully 2,000 girls are studying law in this country at the present time. Preparing to become mothers-in-law some day, perhaps.

The Mule's Name.

Not all of the good negro stories come from the South. For instance, there is the one told by John Poucher, Jr., now of Omaha, though formerly of these parts, who has been visiting his brother-in-law, "Heathen" Wood, in Louisville recently. John was a newspaper man once, but he is preaching now, says the Louisville Times.

He says there is an old negro in Omaha who, strange as it may seem in that latitude, never was a slave. The old man does odd jobs of hauling, for which purpose he uses a gigantic mule of tremendous strength and equal deliberation and determination. One day John asked the old man the mule's name.

"Dat mule am name Co'peration," was the answer.

"What on earth ever made you give him such a name as that?" John asked.

"Jes' 'cause dat am de nachel name fo' 'im," said the old man. "Dat ar mule, he kin stan' mo' 'buse an' go right ahead havin' 'is own way dan any white possum yo' eber see."

ern sailor's diet.

Until eight years ago no serious attempt was made to find out what was best for the sailors and to provide it. At one time an allowance of 30 cents a day was made for each sailor's food, and if the sailor did not draw his rations he got the money. This system was naturally abused, and attempts to devise a better plan led to the present system, which makes a more liberal food allowance than any other country makes to its sailors. At present there are about 55,000 enlisted men in the navy, and it costs the government about \$7,400,000 annually to feed them. It has been found, however, that it is well repaid in the class of men attracted, and in the general efficiency of the crews. The Wyoming is the prize ship of the navy. Her gun crews hold the record for target practice. Here is a sample menu: Breakfast—Fried eggs, friend bologna, fried potatoes, bananas, bread, butter and coffee. Dinner—Grilled sirloin steak, fried onions, mashed potatoes, coconut custard, bread and coffee. Supper—Beef a la mode, hashed brown potatoes, corn fritters, bread, butter and tea.

It has been found that since the modern sailor chews less tobacco and drinks less strong liquor than his predecessor of the days when each man received his daily allotment of rum, more sweet stuff is required. For the sailors in the Atlantic reserve fleet stationed at the Philadelphia navy yard the government last year bought thirty tons of candy and 80,000 packages of salted peanuts. The food value of both candy and peanuts, when taken as a part of a carefully designed diet, is high, which accounts for the large quantity given to the men. The old sailor often quenched his thirst with water which was by no means pure. Today the American sailor drinks only distilled water. Medical experts in the service have found that the use of pure water lessens the amount of rheumatism and increases the general health of the men. Of course, food alone is not responsible for the remarkable efficiency of the navy, but officers and men are agreed that it deserves more praise than it gets.

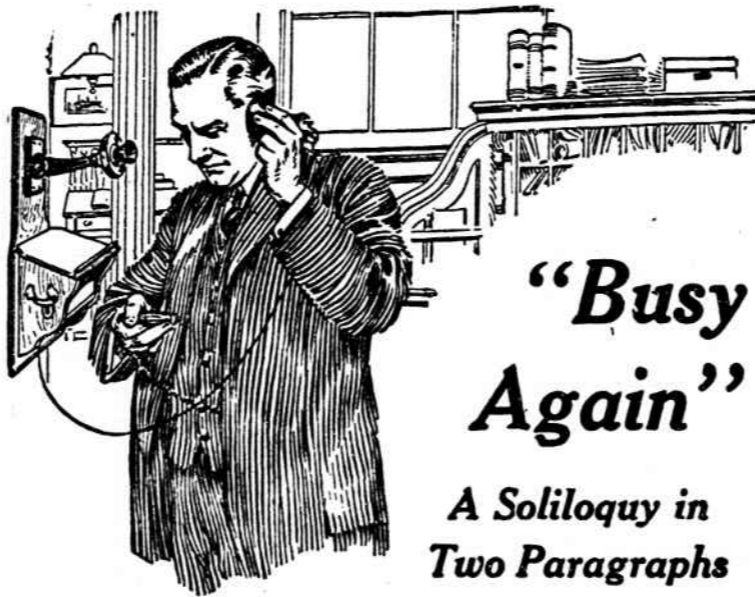
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