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QUERIES

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it) which was "raised" on the stay and which prevented the eye of the collar passing it. It was made of spun yarn wound round and round, pointed over.—W. B. W.

16. MASTERS OF THE NAVY.—The Commissioners for enquiring into abuses in the Navy in 1618 say: "*The antient institution* was this. . . . *Four Principal Masters governed the shippkeepers and the shippes.*" The duties of the Four Principal Masters was to "ground" (dock) the King's great ships and to pilot them from Port to Port, attending for this purpose by turns as required. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth their number

was increased to six (after 1588) and they were supplied with magnificent uniforms which are fully described in papers of the reign of James I. The Commissioners proposed the reduction of the number of Principal Masters to the original four. During the Interregnum, when the Royal Dockyards were extended, the services of the Principal Masters became more frequently required, and they were made *permanent* officials under the title of "Masters Attendant," one to each Dockyard. These Masters Attendant were superseded a few years ago by Captains R.N. on the Active List, bearing the title "Captain of the Dockyard," as at present.—R. M. B.

QUERIES.

17. THOMAS, LORD COCHRANE: "THE RAPE OF THE TABLE."—Can any reader of THE MARINER'S MIRROR say whether a copy of a poem called "The Rape of the Table" by one William Jackson, afterwards Cochrane's Secretary, is in existence? In 1811 Lord Cochrane, then captain of the *Impérieuse*, had a dispute with the Vice-Admiralty Court at Malta about prize-money, and more or less *vi et armis* carried off the table of fees from the precincts of the Court as a testimony against it. Jackson's verses satirically describe the affair, and a copy of them which he sent to Cochrane was the beginning of their correspondence, although they did not meet until 1814. A collection of William Jackson's "poems" was published in 1860 (when he must have been about seventy) "with a prefatory letter of approbation and eulogy from the late eminent poet the Rev. George Crabbe." Crabbe had then been dead nearly 30 years, and his letter, dated the 7th Aug. 1811, has reference exclusively to "The Rape of the Table," a composition which is not included in the volume the letter prefaces. I do not know whether after this sample of Jackson's methods much importance can be attached to what is said in the Introduction to the book, but it informs us that "The Rape of the

Table" was "printed and a considerable edition gratuitously distributed, but was never offered for sale." Possibly this was wise, but I am nevertheless desirous to see a copy if possible. Crabbe's letter shows that he had been asked (in 1811) whether the verses should be published, but, whilst criticising and even praising them, he declines to decide that matter.

As to Jackson, see pp. 333-4 of "Lord Cochrane's Trial" by the late Mr. J. B. Atlay. That author says that the "Autobiography of a Seaman" "was largely the compilation of a Secretary (Earp) careless of facts and dates, resting on material supplied by a man (Jackson) whom Lady Dundonald describes as the greatest enemy her husband ever had in his life."—W. S.

18. "PUYE."—What sort of a vessel was this? I am told that Schout-bij-nacht [Rear-Admiral] Hendrik Bruynsveldt, when cruising off Shetland in the *Prins Henrik Casimir*, with the squadron of Dutch ships under Admiral van Ghent, fell in with a "Puye" on Sunday, 30th June, 1667, and obtained some information from her as to the whereabouts of an English squadron, then cruising between Shetland and the Faroes.—R. STUART BRUCE.

19. THE LANGPORT.—I should be glad if any of your members could give me any particulars relating to H.M.S. *Langport*. Is there any picture of her in existence?—A. G. EASTMENT.

20. THE LEONIDAS.—The other day I saw at the Eldon Club in Chancery Lane, a ship's rudder head, said to have belonged to the *Leonidas*. The date 1818 was roughly carved on it. Can any

of your readers tell what class of ship the *Leonidas* was, or how her rudder head found its way to its present resting place?—R. H.

21. HARPOONER'S SPUR.—What is a Harpooner's Spur? It is mentioned in Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast" (Chap. V.) in the description of a piece of carelessness which was nearly fatal to a harpooner in the whaler *New England*.—R. H.

NEW BOOKS.

THE DESPATCHES OF MOLYNEUX SHULDHAM: Edited by Robert W. Neeser for the Naval History Society, New York, 1913.

Vice-Admiral Molyneux Shuldham was the officer who served as commander-in-chief of the British squadron on the coast of N. America from the end of 1775 until July 1776, when he was relieved by Lord Howe. His period of command was a time of small things, but of difficult and unpleasant service. The Navy was suffering from the neglect which it had for years experienced at the hands of politicians; and the position on the American coast must have been doubly difficult for a naval commander-in-chief, because there seemed to be still much ambiguity as to what course the war was to take. The British government had decided against a purely naval war; it had not apparently made up its mind how the land war could best be conducted, nor indeed had its general on the spot, Sir William Howe.

The details of all this from a naval point of view are to be found in the present volume, printed from transcripts of documents in the English Public Record Office. They have never been published in England, partly no doubt because we have not the affectionate remembrance of that war which Americans have, partly, too, because the originals are here and readily at hand for the student who wishes to consult them. The selection made by Mr. Neeser serves to fill in the details of the picture which we have had hitherto merely in outline. It is by their accumulation that the facts are interesting, even important. Individually they are little more than the commonplace of a state of war; a possible exception being made for the journal of Nicholas Biddle's brig *Andrea Doria*, which is printed at the end of the volume.

Mr. Neeser has contributed an adequate introduction, introducing the actors and explaining the *mise en scene*; and the volume is produced with the simple luxury which marks all the publications of the Naval History Society.