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observed. One holds to the view that Punt was Somaliland, and if that was so there is no valid reason to doubt that the vessels represented in the sculptures as conveying the expedition were the vessels actually so employed. The other school considers that Punt was far south on the east coast of Africa, in which case a voyage was involved only practicable to vessels of good sea keeping qualities, and able on occasion to work to windward under sail, which these ships could not.

(To be continued.)

OLD PILOT BOOKS AND SAILING DIRECTIONS.

BY H. S. VAUGHAN.

WHILE reading the back numbers of the "M. M."—after a prolonged period of sick leave away from my books and papers—Mr. Brindley's remarks as to "Names of Shoals" (Nov., p. 156), reminded me that there is a field for enquiry, which I think has not yet been touched, in the old Pilot Books, Sailing Directions and Coasting Guides.

If members would bring to light any such works that they may know of or may happen to possess, I think a good deal of interesting matter might be discovered, and they would also be "helping on the good work" referred to in the Resolution carried at the Annual General Meeting in November last with regard to a Bibliography of Naval and Maritime literature.

The majority of such works of later date are no doubt well known in the Hydrographic Office at the Admiralty, but I think there must have been many published by private enterprise during the 18th and 17th centuries and perhaps even earlier, which have been lost to sight.

For instance, the first Official Pilot for the West Coast of France and Spain appears to have been compiled in 1867 by Staff Commander J. Penn, R.N., but of what unofficial publications did this take the place? In all these things no doubt one works back to original log entries—such as those of the cheery navigator that Mr. Prideaux Naish has given us—"You will have in going along shore 11 to 15 fathoms Water Sandy ground, I say after you come off Plum Poynt"—and similar entries

going back to earlier times, but how many "Pilots" or "Sailing Directions" were published in the interval between those primitive gropings and the day when official authority stepped in? A good many, I believe; probably, in some of these wonderful little self-contained "shipping and fischar tounes" that contributed so much to the growth of England's trade and Sea power, small works of the kind were published to suit the particular trade of their merchant adventurers. The Flotsam and Jetsam of the ancient shipping trade that one still comes across in private nooks and corners of such places as Whitby, Fowey, Hull, or Shoreham fill one with a great respect for the efficiency and independence of such communities.

At all events, these considerations led me to think that a short notice of an old volume in my possession may be useful. Perhaps some members are already acquainted with the work, and there may be a copy in the Admiralty Library, for I see that the Alphabetical list of Subscribers to the *Little Sea Torch* by J. T. Serres, printed in 1801, is headed by "Admiralty, the Rt. Hon. the Board of, 2 copies," while "Vincent, Earl St. (sic) Admiral, K.B., 1st Lord," also took 2 copies. This volume came into my possession a great many years ago through the family of an old West Country Pilot.

J. T. Serres was Marine Painter to King George III. and Marine Draughtsman to the Admiralty, and the chief joy of the book to me is that it is "Enriched with upwards of one hundred Appearances of Headlands and Lighthouses and plans of the principal Harbours." The whole of these are aquatints; they are in beautiful "state" and their delicate colours are as fresh as when printed. The draughtsmanship is excellent, and the natural effects of the tide-rips, squalls, local shipping and other details with which the "Appearances" are "embellished," make these pictures very fascinating to the eyes of the artist and the seaman.

It is not, however, the artistic qualities of this—or other similar productions, which may be expected to interest members, but rather a comparison of the information available for the contemporary navigator with that furnished in the present Sailing Directions, and a consideration of the changes that have taken place in the bearings and aspect of the coastlines.

The Little Sea Torch or *Petit Flambeau de la Mer*, was translated by J. T. Serres from the French of Le Sieur Bougard. John Thomas was the son of Dominic Serres, who first came to England as a French Prisoner of War, and in 1790 became Marine Painter to George III.; in which position his son succeeded him. John

Thomas much excelled his father as a draughtsman and painter, and, as a Frenchman, his right to translate Bougard is undeniable, but his qualifications as a Mariner are more open to doubt.

In the dedication of his work to the Right Hon. Earl Spencer he makes the following statement :—

“ Most able Judges of Maritime Affairs have long ago pronounced *Le Petit Flambeau de la Mer* a work of the highest value and authenticity. Among the most distinguished of those judges may be ranked Charles Cunningham Esq., Commander of His Majesty's Ship *Clyde*, a gentleman as eminent for Bravery as knowledge, with whom I had the honour of making two cruizes, and at whose instigation I first undertook the translation of this work. He put it into my hands with the warmest commendation of its contents, declaring that if I were to give a version of it, I should be doing an essential service to my country, and that if the appearances of the Headlands and Charts were equally well executed as the descriptive parts were just and accurate, it would be one of the most valuable books ever published.”

Of Monsieur de Bougard I know nothing and being at present situated in a certain outpost of the Empire known to the initiated as “ Fior del Mondo,” I have no means of finding out, but members who are within reach of civilised libraries could perhaps throw some light on the subject.

It is clear, however, that Capt. Cunningham had a great respect for Bougard's work ; it also seems probable that the date of production of his book in France was at least a few years earlier than 1801.

That Serres translated his author literally and without much practical knowledge of the coasts described is fairly evident from the following under the heading “ Choren River ” :—

“ About 3 leagues to the Westward of *New Haven*, is the River of *Choren*, or *Crambert* ; Vessels of above 200 tons can enter it at high water. This river is not straight, and its entrance is to the Westward of a large village, on the borders of the Coast, called *Brighton* or *Brighthelmston*, and *Choren* is a small league within land.

The entrance of this river is difficult to be discovered, when you are athwart it, from the West Point advancing so much further into the Sea than that of the East. When you enter this river there are two houses, or small towers, a little within land, which must be brought together. These towers are easily known by their being on higher land than the shore, and separate

from the other houses. At the West Point of this River there is a tail of Rocks that must be avoided. It is high water when the Moon is at S. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.W. and N. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.E."

Choren is obviously *Shoreham*, but I must confess that *Crambert* defeated me for some time, until I remembered the little ancient town of *Bramber* and its Norman Keep at the head of the tidal water above Shoreham now called the Adur, but once known as "*Bramber Water*," concerning which Camden says that in his time "the haven could no longer carrie ships in full saile as far as to Brambre by reason of the banks and barres of Sand cast up at the River's mouth."

Now, if we could only get at Bougard's original we should no doubt find these names actually given as Choren and Crambert, and Serres having very little personal knowledge of the Coast of what he calls "my country" rendered them literally. But this also shows that Bougard himself could have had no acquaintance with the little Sussex port and river. His account was probably compiled from the illiterate descriptions and rule of thumb workings of French Smugglers and Masters of small vessels in the cross-channel trade.

This little haven was the resort of these mariners long before, and long after, the day when Charles escaped out of Shoreham River in the *Surprise*, and Choren and Crambert are obviously a phonetic version derived verbally from some individual of this tribe.

The *Little Sea Torch* has plenty of conundrums of this kind within its covers, and will repay comparison of its text with that of the current Channel Pilot and the Pilot for the Welsh Coasts of France and Spain. But I think that the "Appearances," in respect to which Serres was "on his own ground," and a Master of no mean order at that, constitute its greatest interest.

In almost every instance outlines and aspects are considerably altered: erosion and accretion have operated to effect natural changes, towns have sprung up, old buildings have vanished and new landmarks have appeared. I should be glad to reproduce some of these views in a future number of "M. M." if it is considered desirable.