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ANSWERS

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ANSWERS.

112. DAVY JONES.—A friend suggests to me the following about Davy Jones. There was in 1606 one David Jones, mate of the *Roebuck*, a vessel that plundered two Indian junks and brought much trouble on the East India Company's servants. He led the crew of that ship into a mutiny in connection with the surrender of a part of the booty to the Company's ship *Swan*. He appears to have been a truculent ruffian, likely to have been remembered, and he had a pet phrase about the place to which it was prudent to consign plundered ships and persons who knew too much. This phrase may have been adopted by succeeding generations of sailors, with the addition of its originator's name. It will be noticed that this is nearly 150 years before the phrase appears to have got into print.—C. N. R.

121. FLYING KITES.—I think that W. B. W. (p. 219 above) is right about the *Essex*, and believe that Huggins added on the extra masts and sails to his drawing to amuse his children.

But as regards stunsail on stunsail, the tea clippers in the favourable trades were accustomed to lace a lower staysail to the outer edge of the lower stunsails as a wing, and I have instances of them lacing two staysails together to go outside a lower stunsail. They also set watersails under ringtail. One of their chief kites was the "Jamie Green" set along the bowsprit under the jibs, which caught the "fool wind" out of the jibs. It was three foot deeper than a top-gallant stunsail, otherwise of the same measurements, and was a most valuable sail, being always carried on a wind. They also set a "jib o' jib," or jib topsail, either on the royal or topgallant fore stay. When double top sails first came in, the tea clippers at any rate laced the foot of the upper topsail to the lower topsail yard.

Regarding the crossjack in ships with big mainsails and masts set close together, the crossjack would not stand when at all near the wind, and that is probably the reason why the old short ships with their main and mizen masts very close together never bent a sail on the mizen lower yard. Many of the clippers also laced a bonnet on the fore course.—B. L.

129. CAPITAL SHIP.—"The *Ramillies* was taken by the *lec*, . . . Thus was this capital ship . . . reduced to a mere wreck." The event referred to is the hurricane of 17th September, 1782; and [the *Ramillies* was, of course, a two-decked ship of 74 guns. The passage is from a contemporary account of the loss of the ship, quoted in the biography of Lord Graves given in Vol. V. of the "Naval Chronicle." (p. 397.)—G. C.

145. MONKEY GAFF.—I think "monkey gaff" only means a small gaff, probably from the idea that what was big enough for a monkey would not do for a man. "Monkey bitts" were small bitts. "Monkey topsail" was a miniature topsail, either bent to the cross-jack yard or to a spare top-gallant yard triced up to the foremast just abaft the break of the forecastle, and used solely for instructional purposes. "Monkey boom" is still in use as the name for any small quarter boom used to make boats fast to. The gaff, which some ships used to have to act as a spreader for the top-gallant backstays, was also, I think, called the "monkey-gaff." There is also "Monkey Island," the top of the fore chart house, sacred to the use of the captain and navigator; but the origin of this expression, though obvious, is certainly different.—T. H. M. J.

Referring to W. B. W.'s mention of the use of monkey as a common sea diminutive, may it not have arisen from a monkey being in some degree like a small man? Not, however, that "monkey" is etymologically a diminutive of "man," for Skeat (*Etym. Dict.*) gives it as a corruption of Old Italian *monicchio*, the diminutive of O. Ital. *mona* or *monna*, an "ape" or "monkey."—H. H. B.

153. RAKE OF MASTS.—"Vanderdecken," (the late W. Cooper, who was well known as a first rate fore and aft sailor in the Sixties) in his "Yachts and Yachting," 1873, p. 146, says: "As regards the raking of a schooner's masts, there is a great diversity of opinion; it is difficult to ascertain what gave rise to the raking of masts, but the probability may be that the system originated in some sharp bowed vessel having had her spars placed too far forward, consequently the centre of propulsion also, and being at the same time too high; under these circumstances, having proved a wet and dangerous vessel, diving into the sea when before the wind, and labouring severely and running off her helm when close hauled, in order to remedy such serious defects, the experiment of raking her masts was tried, and found to succeed perfectly; a discovery it might possibly have been called, whereas it was nothing more than locating the centre of propulsion of sails where it ought to have been originally, and thus hitting upon the proper distribution of her canvas, afterwards it was considered of benefit as thereby obtaining lifting power, but it is equally possible that whatever is gained in lifting power is lost in the effective propulsion of the vessel. . . . A very moderate rake in a vessel's masts looks well, and from our having so long associated it with

"the rig of a schooner it is difficult to divest ourselves of the idea that she cannot be perfect, or present a handsome appearance without it; but practically considered the less there is the better."

Rear Admiral A. W. Schomberg in his "Practical remarks on Building, Rigging, Arming and Equipping H.M. Ships of War, 1832," says page 69:—"It (raking masts) is a point on which the good or bad qualities of the ship in sailing and working, &c., may more depend than might be supposed. . . . English-built ships I have observed do not in general need raking the masts to improve their sailing, &c. I mean English Models. . . . A ship that requires her masts to rake considerably, I suppose must have a particularly lean bow, and which may cause her trim to be much by the stern, more so than ships with a fuller harping. English frigates are not so over fine in their bottom as the generality of the French and Spanish ships, therefore sail better with masts not so much raked. Foreign small craft rake their masts more than ours in general. An English cutter's mast is nearly upright; a schooner must rake her masts; her foremast is considerably farther forward than the one mast of a cutter."

In "The Art of Rigging," by G. Biddlecombe, Master in H.M. Fleet, 1848, the frontispiece has a fine engraving of a schooner, among other craft, with her mainmast raked some 17° as "W.S." mentions.

The masts of the celebrated Yacht *America* were very much raked when she won the famous cup in '52. For a time she revived the moribund fashion, but it had pretty well died out in the Sixties.

The Swansea pilot schooners used to have a peculiar rig of an upright foremast and a mainmast stepped in the middle length of the boat, and so much raked that the head plumed over the after part of the cockpit. The rake was generally quite 27°. Their sails were mainsail, foresail, and jib on a running bowsprit, and they had no rigging, or stays of any kind, and their running gear reduced to sheets and one halliard to each sail. They were very handy under any sail and a man could work a boat of 25 tons single handed. A. D. SETON.

[The question of raking masts is complicated, but it is probably safe to say that the object has always been to shift the centre of effort of the sails on the mast without shifting the step of the mast itself. This tendency can be studied in mediæval representations of ships, and, if Mr. Moore's interpretation of the scratches of his Carthaginian ship be the right one (p. 281 above), in the classical period. The fashion of raking masts aft is, it will be noticed, very modern when compared with that of raking them forward. Ships of the 16th century raked their mizzen mast somewhat aft, and their foremast over the bow. The aft raking masts of small craft seems to have come in with the sloops of the

early 17th century (see the article *Cutter and Sloop* in the November number), and to have been retained in schooners when that type was evolved from the sloop. But it should be noticed that, originally at least, the question of fine lines forward had nothing to do with the rake aft, for these sloops were full bowed. It would seem reasonable to suppose that only full bowed vessels can afford to have their masts stepped right forward, and that vessels with fine lines would do better to step their masts further aft, and not to rake them. In support of this suggestion the Bermudian sloops may be quoted which had their mast stepped right in their eyes, and were very full bowed. So too the traditional English cutter type had for long a raking mast of huge size, stepped rather far forward. This entailed a full bow, and the full bow survived after the mast was placed further aft and stepped upright.—ED.]

155. H.M.S. "PRESIDENT."—There were at least three ships of this name in the R.N. prior to the capture of 1815. The first was a 26-gun ship of 220 tons, which appears in the Parliamentary fleet in 1646. The second, sometimes called *Great President*, was a 40-gun ship launched at Deptford in 1649. She took part in the first Dutch war, her name being changed at the Restoration to *Bonaventure*. The third was a 38-gun ship, captured from the French in 1806, and broken up in 1815. There were also the *Old President* and *Little President* prizes of 1651. It would be interesting to know why the name was chosen in 1646. Was it a hint to Charles?—W. G.

H. P. is also thanked for an answer.

156. THE USE OF NATIONAL FLAGS.—The national colours for a British merchant ship are fixed by law (Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, § 73) as "the red ensign usually worn by merchant ships," but no position is assigned for the flag. By immemorial usage the term "ensign" is confined to a flag flown either upon a staff at the stern or at the peak. Boteler says, "In strictness of terms, these only which are carried out in the tops are to be called flags, the others are named the colours or ensigns and pendants," showing that the distinction was accepted in 1634. Illegal colours may be seized by any naval or military commissioned officer on full pay or any customs or consular officers, and the fine (£500) recovered in the High Court or a Colonial Vice-Admiralty Court.—W. G.

160. RUDIMENTARY BOWSPRITS.—The rudimentary bowsprit is no doubt utilised for putting on a bull rope when the cable is shackled to a buoy. It prevents the buoy from bumping against the side, to the annoyance of people who sleep in that vicinity. It also prevents damage to paint work.—H. L. F.

A short horizontal bowsprit, similar to that of Austrian men-of-war, is rigged in French

torpedo boats. May I supplement the Editor's note on 286 by suggesting "vestigial" instead of "rudimentary" or "atrophied" as the most appropriate adjective for these small bowsprits, thus adopting the zoological term for organs which have atrophied only partially?—H. H. B.

[A glance at the photographs of Austrian ships in 'Fighting Ships' will show that H. L. F. is right.—Ed.]

186. THE WHISTLE OR CALL.—When Howard was killed in his attack on Brest in 1513, his whistle was sent to the Queen of France; "non pas son sifflet d'honneur, mais est celui de quoy il commandoit." The War with France, 1512-13, p. 139, N. R. Soc.—R. C. A.]

[The passage cited shows that the whistle was used at this date, April 1513, as a badge of office both by the English Lord Admiral, and by the French Amiral du Levant. Sir Edward Howard, the Lord Admiral, was seen in his last moments to "take his whistill from aboute his neck, and wrap it together, and hurlid it in to the see" (*Op. cit.*, p. 144). His body was recovered, and with it the whistle, "de quoy il commandoit," which was brought to Prégent, the Amiral du Levant, from whose galley Howard had been thrust overboard. In recognition of his success, the Queen of France sent to Prégent "ung siffet avec la chayne." Prégent says ". . . En récompense, je lui envoie celui dudit Admiral," and then comes its description as quoted by R. C. A.]

QUERIES.

187. FORE TACK BUMPKIN.—I had the opportunity the other day of seeing a very fine model of a 1st rate, belonging, it seemed from such of her rigging as remained, and from the general appearance and decoration of her hull, to the reign of George I. She had small fore tack bumpkins which served as fairleads, for the tacks passed through them to the peak head after the manner usual at that time. This is the earliest example of the bumpkin in anything like its recent form that I know. Perhaps readers of the MARINER'S MIRROR can supply earlier or contemporary instances.—MELDERNIX.

188. "FIDDICK ROYAL."—I have come across the term "fiddick royal," and should be glad if someone could explain it.—C. T. R.

189. "SCULLING."—When recently going over the *Caledonian Mercury* for 1779, I came across an expression that I do not understand. Perhaps some of our members may explain? The expression occurs in a Lerwick letter, giving an account of the stranding of the sloop *Jane*, of Thurso, 8th June, 1779. It says:—". . . she . . . was floated to a beach about three or four miles from the place she struck, where she fell over on her side, and was in great danger of being lost, but by taking out the mast, boltsprit and *sculling* her sides . . . the vessel has since been floated to a secure harbour." Was "sculling" undergirding by hawsers, or were sails thrummed round the bottom?—R. STUART BRUCE.

190. DUTCH SHIPPING LISTS.—Can any of our members inform me if in Holland any

shipping lists similar to our Lloyd's List were published about 1770, or later?—R. STUART BRUCE.

191. TARTAN CAPS.—In a book, entitled "Cavendish, or the Patrician at Sea," by W. J. Neale, it is stated in Vol. I., p. 54, that in answer to a call for sideboys, came "Two little imps of darkness . . . with tartan caps . . . to do honour to the party from the yard." Tartan caps are also said to have been worn at the time of the war with Russia. Neale was in the Navy either as a clerk or a master's mate, and "Cavendish," his first book, was published in 1831. Possibly, therefore, some order regarding the use of tartan caps or the issue of them as slops, may be found. It is likely also that officers are still living who have seen them worn.—R. A. W.

192. FLEMISH ACCOUNT.—How did this phrase come by its meaning. Smyth gives it, but does not make it clear that it was only used colloquially. Thus, if a fellow was seen wasting anything, one would say: "There'll be a Flemish account of that, the way you're going on."—W. B. W.

[The well-known couplet:

"In matters of commerce the fault of the Dutch
Is giving too little and asking too much"]

hardly seems to explain the phrase; unless perhaps we could suppose it to have implied originally merely an unprofitable account or "losing tally." But why in that case should the nationality be changed from Dutch to Flemish?]