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QUERIES

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QUERIES.

20. LOCAL CRAFT OF THE WEST INDIES.—Is there a published description of the various types of sailing boats used for fishing and trading in the Antilles? Nearly every island has a distinctive rig, though fore-and-aft schooners are fairly common for trading trips along the whole chain of islands. These, I think, hail from only two or three places, however, *e.g.*, the true ports, such as Port of Spain, Fort de France, &c., while some are American.—H. H. B.

21. THE UNION JACK AT THE FORE.—For how long has it been the custom for H.M. ships to fly the Union Jack at the foremast head when entering or leaving a naval port?

Is it only done at naval ports? Is it a salute? If so, to whom? Or is it a signal? Why was the Union Flag used?

Are there any other formalities in use on these occasions?—E. A. D.

22. DANDY-RIG.—I believe I am right in saying that this term is very imperfectly understood nowadays, and would be glad to hear exactly what significance it has had within the memory of our members. I would like particularly to know how a *dandy*, a *ketch*, and a *galliot* were distinguished from one another soon after 1830-40, *i.e.*, at the date when the old square-rigged ketches had gone finally out of use.—S. GOODWIN.

23. AN AUSTRIAN FLAG FROM TRAFALGAR.—I have an Austrian Naval Flag, 1786-1869, brought from Trafalgar by the late Commander Stephen Hilton, R.N., then serving as master's mate on board H.M.S. *Minotaur* (74).

At the battle, according to the log at the Record Office, the *Minotaur* engaged and captured a Spanish ship, but lost her during the gale afterwards. The ship's name is not given in the log. Can any of your correspondents assist in finding out (1) who would have the right to fly this flag in a Spanish ship, the Spanish and Austrian Houses being closely related?

(2) Could an Austrian ship have been captured by one of the allied ships and this flag taken from it?

(3) or any other possible solution.—W. W. CORDEAUX (Major and Hon. Lieut.-Col.).

24. PHRASES.—Can any one tell me the origin of the two following expressions:—

1. Pipe-claying his weekly accounts.

2. Over to Gilbert.

The first occurs twice in "Peter Simple"; the first occasion, if my memory serves me right, was when an old salt, travelling by the coach in which Peter Simple was going down to join his ship, described the midshipmen as walking about the quarter-deck "pipe-claying their weekly accounts."

The expressions "over to Gilbert" and "hard a Gilbert" have been in use for many years, and are often heard now, meaning that something is *AWRY*. Is it possible that these expressions came into use since the production of "H.M.S. Pinafore," etc., by Gilbert and Sullivan, and that they are closely allied to the adjective "Gilbertian," meaning topsy-turvy?—T. H. M. J.

[The passage in "Peter Simple," chap. ii., is:—"Larn, cried the sailor. No; it may be difficult for such chaps as me before the mast to larn; but you, I presume, is a reefer, and they a'n't got much to larn, 'cause why, they pipe-clays their weekly accounts, and walks up and down with their hands in their pockets." Perhaps "to pipe-clay" in this sense was borrowed from the Marines, and meant "to make fit for muster." But what were a midshipman's weekly accounts in 1800 and Wartime?—ED.]

25. UNIFORM OF ROYAL MARINES.—I am anxious to get details of the dress of the Marines when first formed as one Corps under the Admiralty in 1755. Beyond the fact (mentioned among others by Grosse in "Military Antiquities") that they wore red with white facings, and caps like the Grenadiers or Fusiliers, I can get no information at all. I have copies of prints (execution of Admiral Byng, contemporary, and Capt. Willis landing at Otaheite, 1767, published 1772), which show them wearing what purport to be these kind of caps, but they are evidently quite conventional and have no detail as to badges, &c., &c.—C. F.

26. CAPABARRE.—"An old term for misappropriating government stores." (See Marryat's novels.) I take the above from "The Sailor's Word Book." When I was a boy, I distinctly remember an old Admiral making use of it

when referring to a model of a capstan adapted for a lady's workbox. He would point to it and say: "A neat piece of work that, but it was Capabarre," no doubt meaning that it was made out of Government stores. Can any member give the derivation of Capabarre?—C. C. G.

[Dutch *Kaapen*, to take, seize, make prizes; *Kaaper*, a privateer; *Ter Kaap vaaren*, to go a privateering. The word *Kaap* found its way into English in various forms. *E.g.*, Smith, in the "Seaman's Grammar," says: "The *cap-merchant* or Purser hath the charge of all the Carragasoun or merchandise." In the middle of the 17th century *caper* was the regular English term for a privateer, and seems to have survived till about the peace of 1713. *Cap-a-bar* is believed to be a corruption of *Ter Kaap vaaren*, in which case it probably dates back to the period of our wars with the Dutch. But no instance of its use earlier than the end of the 18th century has yet been noticed. "Johnny Bone (the boatswain) was a devil of a fellow at Cap-a-Bar, and would stick at nothing. It is related that the late Lord Duncan, when he commanded the *Edgar*, once said to him, 'Whatever you do Mr. Bone, I hope and trust you will not take the anchors from the bows.'" (N.R.S., J. A. Gardner, p. 70, referring to 1787.) Lord St. Vincent described exponents of this art as "Cape Bar men"; and Marryat in "The King's Own," introduced the well-known character "Captain Capperbar."]

27. GUINEA PIG.—In the "Register of Ships in the service of the East India Company 1760-1810," by Charles Hardy (London, 1811), there is towards the end of the book a list of things necessary for the outfit of "a Midshipman or Guinea Pig." Was Guinea Pig another name for Midshipman, and if so, why?—W. S.

[Thomas Addison (see N.R.S. Naval Miscellany, I. 353), circa 1805, used the term Guinea

Pig as implying a newly joined midshipman in the E.I.Co.'s service. N. E. D. does not so limit the meaning, and it would be interesting to know whether the term was ever applied to a midshipman after his first voyage; also whether it was known in the Blackwall E. Indiamen of the middle of the 19th century. In *Roderick Random* (Chap. xxiv.) Jack Rattlin thus describes Lieut. Bowling: "A good seaman he is . . . none of your Guinea Pigs," in which passage the N.E.D. interprets the term as meaning "an inefficient seaman." The distinction does not seem necessary. A Guinea Pig naturally would be a raw hand.—ED.].

28. THE UNION FLAG.—I was the other day looking at Monsieur Desroches' Dictionary "*avec les enseignes et les pavillons que chaque Nation porte à la Mer*," and the words which I have italicised below in his description of the English Union Flag seem curious in 1687, the date of his book. "*Les Anglois ont encore le Pavillon qu'ils appellent Jac ou d'Union qui est d'azur au Sautoir d'argent, bordé de gueules, avec une Croix de gueules, bordés d'argent sur le tout.*" And sure enough his picture of the "Jac d'Angleterre" shows a thin red edging to the S. Andrew's Cross between it and the blue field. One always thought that until 1801 the only red in the Union was that of the S. George's Cross "*sur le tout.*" Will some flag-loreist explain this intelligent anticipation?—W. S.

29. HORSE MARINE.—What was the origin of this term? Smyth merely gives it as meaning "an awkward lubberly person," who is out of place. But I believe that in the earlier French Navy *Cheval Marin* was used as a ship name. Could there be any connection?—W. B. W.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Warship Engineering. By C. De Grave Sells, M.Inst.C.E. Obl. folio. 45 pp. (Reprinted from the 1911 edition of "Fighting Ships.")

Annuaire pour l'an 1912. Publié par le Bureau des Longitudes. 12°, Paris: Gauthier-Villars.

(A publication somewhat similar to the "Nautical Almanac.")

The Nautical Magazine.

The Yachting Monthly.

The Marine Magazine.