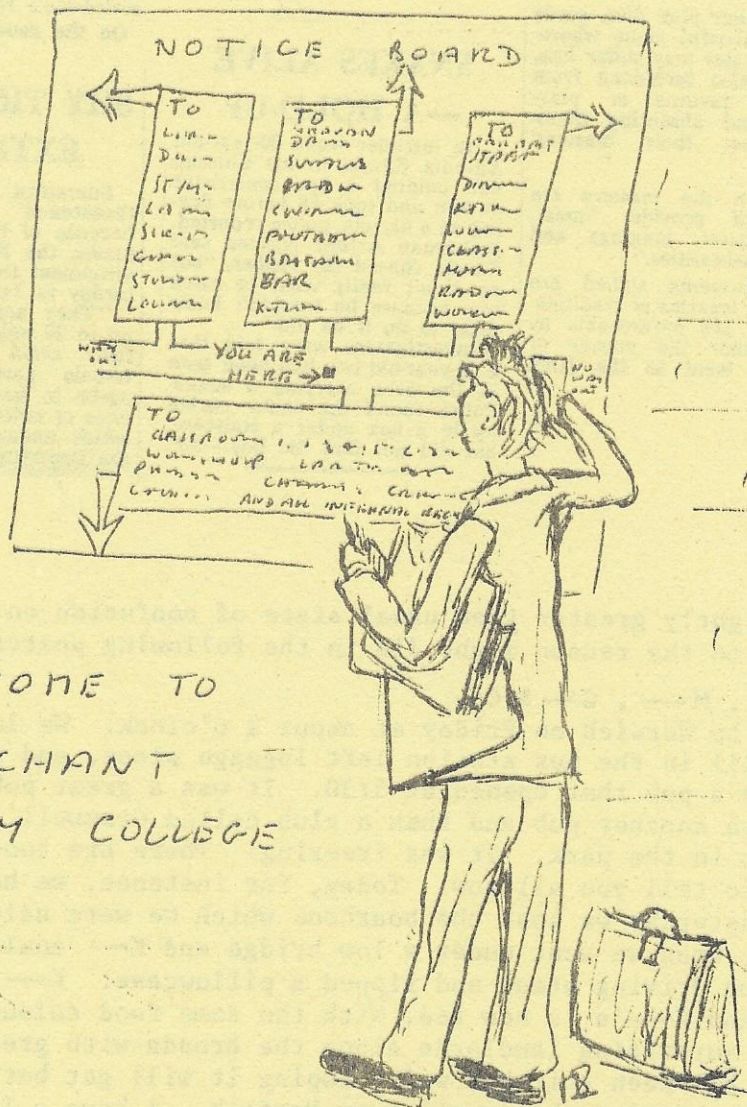


MNC NEWS

No 117

19th September 1980



Or, as they say in a hotel in Oporto:

"Welcome to this house that is yours we are very honourable with your preferency. To your disposition, beyond the refinement that we want to present you, is a perfect service of restaurant and possibility of a surprise trip in a special

SWEEPINGS

Gathered by your Production Staff over the holiday.

FIRST GIRL APPRENTICE WATERMEN

Daily Telegraph Reporter
TWO girls have promised to "obey gladly and do" the lawful commands of their fathers while they are apprentices working on the river Thames during the next five years.

They are the first female apprentices the City of London Company of Watermen and Lightermen has allowed in its 466 years history.

Suzanne Hickman, 19, of St Katherine's Way, Tower Hill and Lynne Ennis, 18, of Otford, Kent appeared before the Master and Court of the Company. Reasons for breaking the all-male tradition, and the suitability of the applicants were considered.

Handles boats

The indentures, binding the girls to their masters—both instances their fathers—were torn in half, one half for the apprentice and the other for the master, according to the practice dating back to when there were disputes over apprenticeships.

Suzanne is at present working as a receptionist, but has experience of handling boats in Britain and the West Indies. Lynne is a groom with the horses on her father's farm. They had not met before they appeared at the Watermen's Court, but their families have long connections with the river. Lynne's father is a dock-pilot.

Pledged to secrecy

Both Miss Hickman and Miss Ennis have now pledged themselves to keep the secrets of their masters, not waste their goods and to neither "fornicate nor contract matrimony within the said term."

They cannot play dice, cards nor any unlawful game whereby their master may suffer loss. They are also forbidden from "haunting taverns or play-houses" and absenting themselves from their masters' services.

In return the masters are pledged to provide "meat, drink, apparel, lodgings and all other necessities."

The documents signed are not merely legacies of tradition. The terms are enforceable by law if either the master or apprentice went to the High Court.

YELLOW PERIL HITS SWEDEN

By Our Staff Correspondent
in Stockholm

Wasps at Gaevle, in central Sweden, are systematically eating the yellow paint off outhouses in a district of semi-detached homes. Each consumes up to a square inch or so at a time.

About a dozen outhouses have already been denuded. Experts think the paint may contain an ingredient the wasps cannot resist.

SNAKES ALIVE —A HOLD-UP

An intruder woke 28-year-old Antonia Zavala in his Chicago flat, pointed a boa constrictor at him and took £6 before fleeing on a bicycle, police reported. Policeman Arthur Nielsen said Zavala chased the robber, "but he didn't really want to catch him because he wouldn't know what to do if he did."

Investigators were told that a 15-year-old boy had been seen in the area carrying a snake. Police found the snake curled up in a box under a staircase, but did not find the boy.—AP.

Simple as NHS

A DEPARTMENT of Health announcement on rent increases for property let to staff by NHS authorities gives this "guidance" on the method of calculating the rents:

1. Assess revised rent for each tenanted property.
2. Total revised rents under 1 to arrive at revised national gross rent income.
3. Total existing rents to arrive at present gross income.
4. Deduct 3 from 2.
5. If 4 results in a negative sum, implement new assessed rents.
6. Otherwise, divide 4 by the total number of tenanted properties to arrive at average annual assessed increase for each property.
7. Divide 6 by 52 to arrive at average weekly assessed increase.
8. If 7 is £1.50 or less than £1.50 implement new assessed rents.
9. If 7 is more than £1.50 multiply change assessed for each rent under 1 by 150 over the amount calculated under 7 and implement the resultant scaled-down rents.

On the count of ten: fire!

SHY TIGERS FACE EXTINCTION

Sumatran tigers are threatened with extinction because of the shyness of the males, the North Sumatra Environment Department said yesterday in Jakarta.

"They are used to walking up to 20 miles a day, but carefully avoid the company of female partners. They only agree to have sexual relations once or twice a year, a practice which endangers the species," the Department said.—UPI.

If anyone has noticed a slightly greater than usual state of confusion on the Norfolk Broads this summer, a clue to the reason might lie in the following postcard message:—

"Dear P—, B—, C—, M—, G— & Co.

"Today is Monday. We got to Norwich on Friday at about 2 o'clock. We left our luggage and beer (192 pints! Honest!) in the bus station left luggage place, and went to look around. We managed to find a pub that opened at 5:30. It was a great pub and we stayed until 9:00. Then we went to another pub and then a club called Cromwell's. This shut at 2:00 and we had to sleep in the park. It was freezing! There are too many funny things that have happened to tell you all now. Today, for instance, we had a water fight and lost the map! Yesterday we lost the boathook which we were using as a flag-pole to fly our Union Jack, when we went under a low bridge and K— couldn't stop in time. We've also broken our driving stool and ripped a pillowcase. K— and S— have peroxided their hair and K—'s is now red. With the same food colouring we have been dyeing our beers and surprising landlords along the Broads with green and red pints. So far the weather has been shit but we're hoping it will get better! (Joke) I have been killing the 'breakout' machines all over Norfolk. I have a lot more to tell and it's only Monday. I will see you when I get back. (P.S. Muchos Beermats)."

Having written which, he put the wrong address on the card, and it wandered Gravesend looking for a home, until someone eventually delivered it to a member of Staff, who passed it on to us. For further reading, we suggest, "The Art of Coarse Sailing" by Michael Green!

NOT-AN-EDITORIAL

Hallo - Here is the News. Your paper, for new blokes - and blokesses. but please note that we do NOT recognise sexual discrimination here, and therefore cannot, and shall not, abolish it. He and She, we will call you, but never It; Boy or Girl, but never Thing - we believe Far Too Much in the Dignity of Mankind for that.

As I was saying, when I sidetracked myself, and no doubt called down upon myself the wrath of -, but I sidetrack again! As I was saying, here is Your News, and if YOU do not have much in it this week, it is only because you have not written anything yet - until one of you appoints himself (is Volunteered by DG?) you do not even have an Editor - which is why this is Not An Editorial.

This is where you can publish your small ads. (but not for massage or French Lessons, please), air your views freely, subject only to the most rigid censorship, see stories and poems of yours in print, see the College football results if somebody has bothered to write them and submit them for publication, read of forthcoming events, puzzle your noddles over quizzes - the list is endless and subject only to our discretion. And if you want to know how to get in on all this, there is a red cardboard box in the Library. It has 'News' on the outside of it, and a wide slit through which your priceless manuscripts may be dropped. We are waiting!

Something to frighten car drivers. The daughter of someone of my acquaintance had bought a nearly-new car and was planning to go to Scotland in it. Being prudent, she first of all took it to a garage and had four new tyres fitted - brand new, not retreads. Then she drove home, took the children to school, and set out to visit her mother.

She was driving along a quiet country road, not having gone very far, when there was a sudden very loud 'bang', and the car went completely out of control, spinning round and round in the middle of the road. If she had been on the motorway instead of in a deserted country lane she must have crashed. Fortunately, too, she was a very good driver, having taken her Advanced Driving Test and recently completed a course on a skid-pan.

Some people in a nearby farm house rushed out with a fire extinguisher. Like her, they thought the car must have exploded.

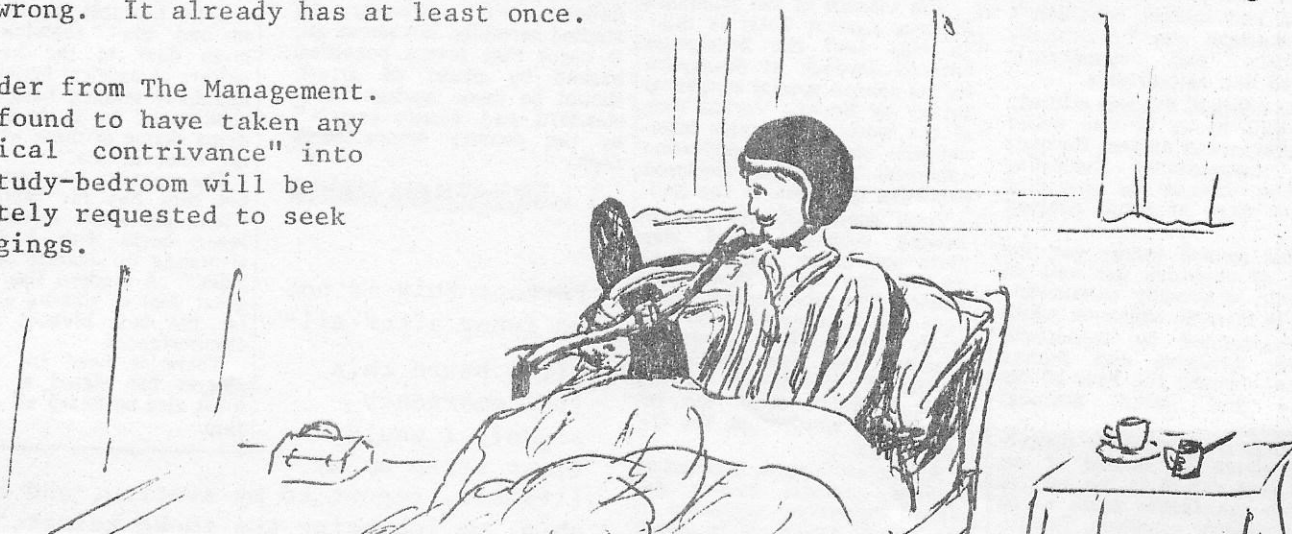
However, examination revealed that the car was perfectly all right, but that one tyre was in ribbons; it had not merely burst, it had blown apart.

If she had not been an excellent driver, if she had not had the road to herself at the time, if she had gone off it and hit some obstacle, presumably she would have been just another accident figure. There would have been no obvious mechanical fault in the car, no reason to believe a brand new tyre had failed before the crash rather than been shredded as a result of it, it would quite possibly have been put down to error on her part. As it was, both she and the car survived unscathed and there is no doubt where the blame lay.

The garage, appalled, insisted on fitting another completely new set of tyres, and to be sure used tyres of a different make, and it is to be hoped that the manufacturer of the others carries out a very thorough investigation.

Meanwhile, just because you have new tyres on your car, do not assume that nothing can go wrong. It already has at least once.

A reminder from The Management. Anyone found to have taken any "mechanical contrivance" into their study-bedroom will be immediately requested to seek new lodgings.





RNLI

MERCHANT NAVY COLLEGE BRANCH

FOREIGN COIN APPEAL

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution are having a Foreign Coin Appeal and I thought that it would be a good idea to have a collection in the College. With so many seafarers, and students holidaying abroad, there must be many of you with the odd foreign coin in your pockets.

Please help the RNLI with this appeal and hand in your foreign currency to the Duty Office or the General Office.

Those of you new to the College may be interested to know that we have a very active branch of the RNLI at the College and we hold events each term to help raise money for this very worthy cause. If any student is interested in helping us or in becoming a Committee member would they please come to see me in the General Office.

CAROLE SEAWARD - Hon. Secretary. MNC Branch of RNLI

The grim lessons of Bantry Bay

COMING only three days after the 215,000 ton supertanker Energy Concentration broke its back and foundered in Rotterdam harbour, the report of the official inquiry into the Bantry Bay disaster highlights yet again how the safety record of the world's big tankers is rapidly becoming a nightmare.

First reports indicate that the Liberian-registered Energy Concentration snapped in two when its 150,000 ton cargo of crude oil was unloaded unevenly, creating unbearable stress on its structure. Luckily no lives were lost.

But the Bantry Bay report shows with chilling effect how a similar structural collapse can have fatal results. The break-up, fire and subsequent explosion that devastated the French-owned Betelgeuse at Gulf Oil's Whiddy Island terminal in Bantry Bay 18 months ago claimed 50 lives.

The official report is unequivocal in allocating the major share of responsibility for the disaster on the tanker's owners, the French oil company Total. Its conclusion is that the tanker was "in a seriously corroded and wasted condition"; its structure was "abnormally seriously and significantly wasted due to corrosion."

The effect of this was critical: the hull broke in two under the pressure of uneven, inexperienced and unmonitored ballasting halfway through the unloading of its cargo of Saudi Arabian oil.

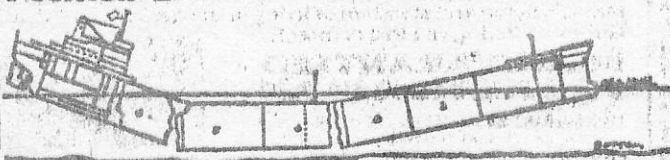
This caused sparks and the leak of explosive gas and oil vapour, eventually culminating in the massive explosion which—compounded by inadequate safety facilities and human error—claimed the lives of the crew and seven terminal workers.

What is particularly disturbing about the details of the 488-page report is the way in which the tanker came to be in such poor condition. The tri-

Position 1



Position 2



The Betelgeuse buckled under stress, causing sparks and two back-breaking explosions.

pany was able to get away with this underlines the inadequacy of international standards of tanker safety and inspection.

Worse, since oil companies are generally acknowledged to be among the most responsible tanker owners in the world, it raises the possibility that a significant proportion of the world's fleet of 3,200 large tankers (over 10,000 gross tonnes) is sailing around the world in an unsafe condition.

The essence of the tribunal's findings against Total is this: in May 1977 the Betelgeuse entered drydock at Singapore for its second special structural survey by Bureau Veritas (one of the world's six major international shipping classification agencies). The survey disclosed extensive corrosion in the hull.

Total spent \$233,000 on renewing damaged steel supports and spars, but failed to do all the work that was needed. The extra repairs would have cost another \$311,000 and taken a week. But apparently because Total was considering selling the Betelgeuse at the time, it didn't think the repairs were worthwhile, the tribunal says.

At the same time, it failed to replace cathodic anodes designed to prevent corrosion in the ballast tanks, or to apply

The Singapore service, says the tribunal, was "completely inadequate."

The tribunal highlights other disturbing features: among them the inadequacy of the tanker's gas ventilation system, the absence of an inert gas system and the fact that the Betelgeuse did not have a "loadicator," a machine to show if a tanker is suffering undue structural stress. The cost: a few thousand pounds.

The tribunal's 45 recommendations will obviously be studied carefully, but above all, it urges that severe penalties, backed by power of arrest, should be made against "sub-standard and unsafe vessels" by the country where ships dock.

JONATHAN DAVIS

Perhaps this is not so funny after all—

"If I heard this (the emergency signal) I would

first strap on my

lifebelt, report to my station, and abandon ship, my job being the smoke helmet."

Seamen see fire drill as intrusion

By JOHN PETTY
Shipping Correspondent

FIRE is causing the loss of a ship every six days on average because too many seamen regard fire-fighting training as superfluous and an intrusion on their routine, according to a Nautical Institute report by Capt. B. E. B. Edwards.

Fire-fighting practice is regarded aboard too many ships as "Board of Trade sports" which can be over in half an hour with a good bosun who has the sense to rig the hose in advance, says Capt. Edwards, a serving ship's master.

"Abandon ship" myth

He exempts tanker crews from this criticism, but says far too many cargo ships are lost because fires are often tackled by inexperienced amateurs.

Capt. Edwards says it is time to end the "abandon ship" myth dear to the hearts of writers of nautical fiction. Many merchant seamen have become conditioned by it, to the "undying shame of those who make the rules at sea."

The captain who stays with his ship has far more sense "than the idiots attempting to lower boats with a 30ft sea slamming up against the ship's sides." A modern ship takes a great deal of sinking and is by far the best lifeboat in most circumstances.

There is need for a much clearer fire signal at sea. It must also be heard all over the ship.

So you thought you had enough to worry about?

Just as TEC Courses, assessment schedules, impossible 'prep' deadlines and financial problems brought their water level up to your nostrils, there comes more good news. Apparently it's all on the cards that the Rusksies might air-burst a nuclear device (what straight-jacketed twit ever devised that noun for them?) somewhere over the North Sea (so as not to attack anyone directly - just to show they might mean business if we don't quietly withdraw from West Germany or whatever the current demand might be)*

The result would be to knock out all VHF equipment and most of our telephonic and radio communications. Apparently EMP (Electromagnetic Pulse to all you Wogan fans) first really reared its pretty head when an atmospheric test at Johnstone Island in 1958 blacked out street lighting in Hawaii, 1000 km distant. What happened to all the grass skirts isn't recorded.

And if we retaliated (against what? - the Black Sea?) the Warsaw Pact lot are still heavily into valve equipment - not susceptible to destruction by EMP. So, don't ring us, you won't get through; dig out your valve radio and tungsten lamps and throw away all your VHF gear and hope they don't mean it as the beginning of something nastier. (But you won't know - the Beeb won't be able to tell you unless your tranny is on medium wave using ferrite rod aerials.) Like I said, you thought you had enough to worry about?

(*Electronics Today International, August 1980)

(The typing of the above was interrupted by another false alarm from our own "Four-Minute Warning system" - Only two were saved: Sister and I were the only ones who bothered to go outside. One day that will be for real: perhaps. MS)

Browsing through "Great Newspapers Reprinted" I happened on the Picture Post of January 4th 1941. The magazine was devoted to "War Aims": not the immediate winning of it (or, more, the Avoidance of Defeat in January 1941), but the after-war aims. Apparently hundreds of letters were written from men and women in the armed forces about why they were fighting. The Post commented, "One of the things they were NOT fighting for was 2 million unemployed" as in 1939.

What happened?

(That Fire Alarm just went off again. This time I stayed put too. MS)

BLOSSOMS

Are you willing to be subdued,
controlled, stripped clean, made
fertile?

Are you willing to sit, listen, note
and think?

If not you will never really achieve.

The student acquires his units only if
the ground is first broken by lectures,
instructions, orders.

Then a small seed of understanding brings
in concepts, ideas, connections.

And finally blossoms assessments, achieve-
ment, success.

But, Lord, how long.

(With apologies to D.H. Lawrence,
"The Phoenix")

The best way of disseminating information is always reputed to be by a circular letter. In view, therefore, of the lamentable state of publishing, of the current, widespread shortage of circular letters, we are endeavouring to rectify the situation by publishing, for general use wherever necessary, this, a genuine, all-purpose, Circular Letter.

A school teacher asked a seven year old boy during a religious education class:

"Why do we say 'amen' at the end of our prayers?"

After some thought the boy replied, "It's a special way of saying 'Over and out' to God."

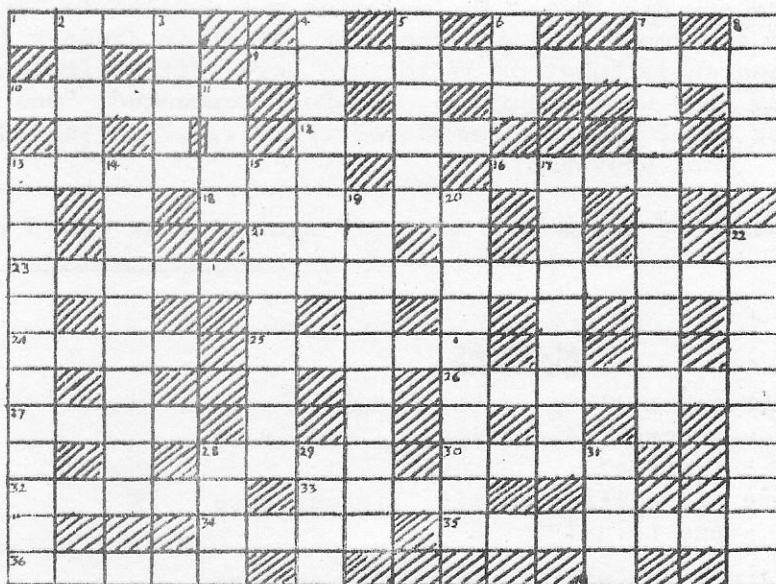
'ORRIBLE CROSSWORD (Yes - this too!)

Clues Across

1. (4) Employs for purpose or two.
9. (5-6) Fixing, to determine result of close race.
10. (5) Heated outcome of meeting of fire and water.
12. (4) To put up with Bruin.
13. (7) Cap a keg - and make a parcel of it!
16. (6) Poetically built under a chestnut.
18. (6) Steps - leading up and down?
21. (7) Beyond which, no more.
23. (7,3,6) Citrus St. Clement's sings in verse.
24. (4) Drying kiln for hops.
25. (5) Layered living spaces suffered by motorists.
26. (7) Put right - or put finishing touch to prayer?
27. (4) Black and white together.
28. (4) Inhabitant of lamp - I'm out for inherited determinant.
30. (4) Desert fruit featured on the calendar.
32. (5) Suggest to put into strands?
33. (4) All bad.
34. (4) A jar for blooms, no doubt.
35. (7) Holder of vote from Hanover became King.
36. (5) Group, clannishly speaking.

Clues Down

2. (5) Rat us! Old Indian maxim.
3. (5) Piled result of making hay.
4. (8) Doubtless places where poteen is consumed on the premises.
5. (6) Beach - stick on it!
6. (3) Towards the back.
7. (4,2,6) Go horsed to the Meet.
8. (5) Of doubtful legality out of the sun.
11. (4) Food for carnivore.
13. (5,2,5) Without doubt makes trial a formality.
14. (5,5) Clear achievement of new broom desired when removing mines.
15. (5,4) Was pyrotechnic of ancient warfare carried to Moscow.
17. (5,4) Unreal find - Pegasus birthplace?
19. (4,3,3) Discoverers of the honeymoon?
20. (4,6) Ladylike seat - pannier style?
22. (10) This of remarkable size Gracie celebrated.
28. (4) Put in irons that only sound like dance.
29. (4) Made for putting clutch in.
31. (4) Search, he ached for every one.



TRELLIS PUZZLE

Four-letter words (no, not those!) hidden in the sentence below fit into the grid as shown:-

"STOP you PEST, it's OPENing"



SOME Attempt will be made, and by that I mean that opportunities will not be missed, to secure any antiques found bearing a legend, but the deal gate-legged table offered was a bad example, its lettering so pale as to be barely readable.



To help, one word is given. Find the other eight.

From a council job-application form:-

"Give the names, addresses and professions of two referees. They should not be your school-teachers, but responsible persons of mature age who are well acquainted with you."

WHY IS A SHIP CALLED SHE?

A ship is called a 'she' because there is always a great deal of bustle around her; there is usually a gang of men about; she has a waist and stays; it takes a lot of paint to keep her good looking; it is not the initial expense that breaks you, it is the upkeep; she can be all decked out; it takes an experienced man to handle her correctly; and without a man at the helm, she is absolutely uncontrollable. She shows her topsides, hides her bottom and, when coming into port, always

Speaking to the building workers' conference, in a debate on death benefits, an Irish delegate declared: "They say you can't take it with you when you go and it is a matter of regret that this benefit is only paid to a member when he has died."

From a magazine advertisement: "Semi-