

# The LOOKOUT



SEA GULLS IN FLIGHT

*Erwing Galloway Photo*

SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK  
VOL. XXXI NO. 3

MARCH, 1940



## "Sanctuary"

Let us remember before God all who go down to the seas on their Lawful Occasions.

O Eternal Lord God, Who alone spreadest out the heavens and rulest the raging of the seas, Who encompasseth the waters with bounds till day and night come to an end, be pleased to receive into Thy almighty and most merciful protection all who go down to the sea on their lawful occasions, and the ships in which they serve. Preserve them from the perils of the deep and the dangers and temptations of the shore, and grant that they may return in safety to their homes, there to enjoy the fruits of their labour, and with thankful hearts to praise Thy Holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## The LOOKOUT

VOL. XXXI, MARCH, 1940

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

by the

SEAMEN'S CHURCH  
INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK  
25 SOUTH ST., NEW YORK, N. Y.

Telephone BOWling Green 9-2710

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*Entered as second class matter July  
8, 1925, at New York, N. Y., under  
the act of March 3, 1879.*

*Subscription*

One Dollar Annually

Single Copies, Ten Cents

Gifts to the Institute of \$5.00 and over  
include a year's subscription to "The Lookout."

*Address all communications to*  
SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE  
OF NEW YORK  
25 South Street

## LEGACIES TO THE INSTITUTE

You are asked to remember this Institute in your will, that it may properly carry on its important work for seamen. While it is advisable to consult your lawyer as to the drawing of your will, we submit nevertheless the following as a clause that may be used:

I give and bequeath to "Seamen's Church Institute of New York," incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, located at 25 South Street, New York City, the sum of..... Dollars.

Note that the words "of New York" are a part of our title.

# The Lookout

Vol. XXXI

March, 1940

No. 3

## The Ways and Means Committee

announces the

Institute's Annual Spring Benefit

## The Seventh Annual International Skating Carnival

for the joint benefit of the  
Seamen's Church Institute of New York  
and the Youth Consultation Service of the  
Church Mission of Help

to be held at

Madison Square Garden,  
Monday Evening, March 25, 1940,  
at 8:45 o'clock



VIVI-ANNE HULTEN  
of Sweden

This will be a gala post-Easter event of great interest. Skating stars of Europe, Canada and America will appear, including GUY OWEN OF CANADA; VIVI-ANNE HULTEN OF SWEDEN; EUGENE TURNER, newly crowned U. S. National Champion; JOAN TOZZER, 1940 U. S. National Women's Champion; the Caley Sisters of Canada; the Toronto Six and many other featured skaters. Members of the Skating Club of New York will appear in the ensembles.

### TICKET PRICES

Side Box seating 9.....	\$75.00	Side Arena (next 4 rows) .....	6.00
End Box seating 9.....	50.00	End Arena (4 rows) .....	\$ 5.00
Promenade Seats .....	7.50	End Arena (next 10 rows) .....	3.50
Side Arena (4 rows) .....	8.00	Mezzanine Seats .....	4.00
Side Arena (next 3 rows) .....	7.00	Balcony Seats .....	3.00

Tickets may be obtained from

MISS FANSHAWE

685 Madison Avenue

REgent 4-7114

Please make checks payable to:

FREDERICK P. DELAFIELD, Treasurer

Tickets will be assigned as reservations are received.

WE ARE COUNTING ON YOUR PROMPT AND LOYAL SUPPORT OF THIS BENEFIT. The proceeds will be used to help maintain the welfare, recreational, vocational and social services at the Institute's 13-story building, 25 South Street, New York, N. Y.



GUY OWEN of Canada



# Bends, Bowlines and Bights

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF KNOTS AND  
FANCY ROPE WORK.

By Raoul Graumont and John Hensel.  
615 pp., New York: Cornell Maritime  
Press, \$10.

*Editor's Note:* We are happy to publish Baron Ireland's review of John Hensel and Raoul Graumont's fine Encyclopedia of Knots. We have watched young Hensel's career since he first came to the Institute several years ago and showed us his collection of knots—a collection which has grown from 200 to 3,100! We have reported on his progress in THE LOOKOUT (See January, 1938 and July, 1939 issues.) Miss Anne W. Conrow, Librarian in the Institute's Conrad Library, reports that numerous seamen are enjoying our copy of the Knot Encyclopedia and some have taken up knot work and splicing in our Merchant Marine School. The book costs \$10.00 and is beautifully illustrated with 270 photographs; has 645 pages. By placing your order through the Institute you pay no extra for the book, and the Cornell Maritime Press publishers, give us a liberal commission. Address inquiries and orders to THE LOOKOUT editor, make checks payable to SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK, 25 South Street, New York, N. Y.

Reviewed by  
BARON IRELAND\*

SOMETHING must be the matter with the book reviewers' eyes. Because who of them has so much as mentioned the volume that should have won the Pulitzer Prize?

The current annum's most thrilling, fascinating, absorbing, exciting, alluring, hypnotizing product of typewriter, pen or pencil?

By which I mean the Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Rope Work, by Raoul Graumont and John J. Hensel.

Show me the man who has sat up until 2 a. m. with W. Clark Russell, Captain Marryat or Charles M. Dana and so on far into the rest of the night.

Who has not yearned to master



John Hensel with just a few of his Knots

the art of throwing a Double Carrick Bend, a Sheepshank, a Jurymast Hitch or a Bowline on a Bight?

Name one summer boarder who has circumnavigated Cranberry Island with six others of his ilk in Captain Archie Spurling's commodious motor sloop Dolphin (adv.) by the day or half day.

Who also has not burned with the desire to be able to weave a Four-Loop Flower Tie, a Monkey Fist, a variated Long Diamond or a Sailmaker's Eye Splice (that's the one that's tucked with instead of against the lay)?

And if you are one of those Russell-Dana-Marryat fans that sat up all night with them, you will sit up all day and all night and the next day and some weeks after that with this one, feverishly weaving and tying and now and then snatching a bite from a sandwich as you fumble with those knots and the about 3,000 others, no matter how busy you may be or how lazy,

And if you don't think you will, you're crazy!

Because even if the text could

have been more explicit in places and once in a while a photograph could have been ditto and in spite of what the authors say no knot or anything else is too complicated to describe if you are willing to take some pains about it,

This book is the most enthralling, delightful, fascinating, amazing, entertaining, romantic, superluperfect knockout of this or any other year and don't anybody doubt it!

For here are, before your eyes, the very knots that pieced together the torn rigging of the Serapis and the Bonhomme Richard in the blaze of battle; here are the bends that unite the peaceful, proudly snorting tugboat to its trailing harem of matronly barges; here are the knots which have drawn blood from the

backs of Russian serfs at the end of a knout and from the backs of Captain Corcoran's tars when fashioned into the lash of a cat-o'-nine-tails; here are the splices that repaired the weather-chafed gear of the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria; here they are all—the knots, the ties, the bends, the splices, the hitches—simple, beautiful, strong and safe—that have controlled the straining spars and bellying canvas of every bugeye, sloop, barkentine, yacht and full-rigger in the world from the moment the first grass sail rose above its dugout canoe.

So you'll have to excuse me now because I have just taken time out to write this between spasms of trying to work a six-strand Star knot and boy am I having fun too!

## Knots in Business and Pleasure

KNOTS have assumed a vital role in the life of Man throughout history. The art of knotting is "as old as human fingers." In prehistoric times, knots tied with ropes made of vines or animal hides and sinews were employed in the basic pursuits of life. It is known that Neolithic Man made rope and tied simple knots. The lake-dwellers of Switzerland during the Stone Age, and the Incas in Peru, used the Sheet-bend in making their nets. The Incas also had a decimal system of numbers based on knots tied in suspended cords, the type of knot and its position in the cord each having a special significance. This system is said to be in use today by Peruvian shepherds.

The Indians of North America utilized knots for recording dates. In Egypt and Persia, where rope was made of flax and papyrus, knots were used in rigging boats and building bridges. The Greeks and Romans, too, possessed a wide knowledge of knots, particularly the Reef Knot.

Today, as in the past, knots play an important, indispensable part in the life and work of many people—sailors, soldiers, surgeons, weavers, builders, farmers, riggers, magicians, fishermen, both sport and commercial, painters, yachtsmen, rope manufacturers, artists, designers, Camp Fire Associations, C.C.C. Camps, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, mariners, vocational and arcraft schools, libraries, hobbyists, collectors, to mention only a few.

Modern commerce and industry is based in part on the art of knotting. But in addition to those who find their livelihood dependent upon the knowledge of knotting and rope work, recent years have seen more and more people turning to knotting and braiding as a delightful hobby. No longer is knotting the exclusive possession of the seafaring man. Today he shares it with thousands of men, women, and children who regard knots not only as instruments of utility but as things of ornamental beauty, and pleasant, wholesome recreation.

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## CAN YOU TIE THESE KNOTS?

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### UP ALOFT

*From the painting by Montague Dawson, Courtesy Art News, N. Y. and Frost & Reed, Ltd. Bristol, England*

### Heart's Desire

By Seaman Israel Stout

Let me hark to the song of a roaring gale	For the call of the sea is in my blood,
As it sweeps through the shrouds and spars,	And the lure of far distant lands;
Let me lie on the deck of a rolling ship	The sway of a deck beneath my feet
And gaze on the rocking stars.	And work for my idle hands.
The whine of the wind in the rigging	For now that I'm old and broken,
And the white foam streaming past—	A stranded hulk on the shore,
Let me feel the kick of a bucking wheel	Let me die with the sound of the sea in my ears—
In my hands as she heels to the blast.	Take me back to the sea once more.

## To the Rescue!



Rescues at sea make newspaper headlines. Rescues ashore are less dramatic, but each year in a quiet way your contributions to the Seamen's Church Institute of New York help to rescue many worthy seamen from despair and discouragement.

It is your way of extending a friendly hand to these seafarers, even though you do not know them personally, and saying: "Welcome". It often cheers up a lonely lad homesick for loved ones far away, or an old mariner who has no home and no relatives, to realize that here at the Institute, because

thoughtful friends like yourself have provided for them, they can enjoy real hospitality, real friendship.

Some of them need temporary financial help to tide them over emergencies. Some have money but need vocational counsel and recreational fellowship. Some need carfare or "work gear" to get a job. Some need medical and dental treatment. All these services, and many more, are provided by the \$100,000. sought annually through voluntary contributions and benefits.



Will you again renew your gift? Please mail it to the  
SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK  
25 South Street, New York, N. Y.



# Slop Chest Tales

Illustrations by Ed Randell

**B**ORROWING the title from a popular song, "Now It Can Be Told," we are telling a few tales here which were unearthed in the Institute's Slop Chest. On shipboard the "Slop Chest" (from the old English term Slope, meaning breeches or pantaloons) is under the supervision of a ship's officer who gives or sells clothing, slickers, rubber boots, etc. to the crew, and is required by law not to make more than a 10% profit on the sale thereof. At the Institute, clothing is given free to seamen in need. Ralph Best is in charge of this storehouse, and interviewing him amid the piles of boots, shoes, caps, and shirts, we learned the interesting tale of a suit. The suit belonged to Dr. Hendrik Willem van Loon, eminent author, historian and illustrator, who sent it to the Institute's Slop Chest, to be given away to some needy sailor, providing one could be found whom it would fit. Since Dr. van Loon's girth and stature dwarf the average, the suit did not readily find a recipient. Ever since Dr. van Loon wrote his book "Ships and How They Sailed the Seven Seas" he has been actively and generously interested in the welfare of merchant seamen and in the work done in their behalf at the Institute. The months went by, and still the suit hung dejectedly in the Slop Chest, awaiting a suitable seaman, until one night a sailor sitting on a pier-head just across from the Institute fell into the East River. A huge Negro seaman jumped in to rescue him. It was a long struggle in the dark waters, and after both seamen were treated for submersion, they came to the Institute. One of the staff noticed that the Negro was ragged and had lost his shoes, so led him to the Slop Chest. The staff member searched for a suit to

fit him. The Negro was about 6 feet 3, weighed a good 250, so Dr. van Loon's suit was tried on; it fitted finely. A bright red polka dot tie attracted his eye, so he was given that, and as the final touch, a straw hat. The sailor's feet were so enormous—no shoes would fit him—that a pair of bedroom slippers had to do, temporarily. Thus attired, in sartorial splendor, he descended to the main lobby where he was greeted by loud cat-calls and Bronx cheers from envious shipmates. "Well, sailor," they said. "I'll bet you'll go up to Harlem now and knock them



"Long John Silver"

for a loop." "Not me," retorted the Negro hero with a wide grin, as he adjusted his scarlet tie, "I'se stayin' far away from dat place. There's a fella up dar who's got it in fer me, so I'se stickin' to South Street, yes sah!"

The wooden leg story concerns an old barge captain who fell asleep on a bench in Jeannette Park, across the way from the Institute, and while in peaceful slumber, an unscrupulous beachcomber stole his wooden leg. John had had that leg

longer than he could remember. He never went anywhere without it. He even used the hollow of the leg as a bank. Now, there he was—without a leg to stand on—broke, robbed, helpless. Some friendly shipmates helped him into the Institute, and to the Slop Chest, where, luckily, a pair of crutches was found to help poor old John Silver out of his predicament. Thereafter, he saved his wages in the Institute's Seamen's Funds Bureau, and when he had saved enough for a new leg, he vowed to have it riveted on, with a burglar-proof padlock.

The glass eye story concerns Seaman Edward Smith—and great was the excitement at the Institute on the day when he lost his glass eye. He left it in the washroom and returning a few moments later, found it had disappeared. Now Smith was very proud of that glass eye, for he had had it made in the Institute's Eye Clinic to exactly match his real left one, which was as blue as the seven seas on which he had sailed for many years. In the meantime, Seaman John Brigg, who had lost an eye in the World War, chanced upon the blue glass orb. It didn't match his other eye, which was brown, but otherwise it was a per-



"Aye, Eye Sir"

fect fit. A staff member, hearing of Smith's plight, walked through the lobby and noticed Brigg, with one blue eye and one brown eye, reading a newspaper. "How come those unmatched orbs?" he asked, and Brigg confessed that he had appropriated the blue glass eye. This story has a happy ending, for in the Slop Chest, a brown eye was found for Seaman Brigg—sent in by some lady when cleaning out her attic. It had belonged to a Confederate soldier.

## Book Review

THE RESCUE OF CAPTAIN LEGGATT

By W. Townend.

New York: William Morrow & Company  
\$2.50.

This is a fine study in fiction form of one of the most vital aspects of human relations today. Can you hate a man's nationality and country but respect him as a human being and even find something to admire in his character and personality? William Townend has written an absorbing story of this conflict.

From a psychological point of view it is original, dramatic and searching. Running currently with the development of the story is an interesting and truthful insight into life in the Merchant Service and that alone would make the book of value and worth reading. A

good deal of extraneous matter is introduced, especially the parts relating to Captain Leggatt's daughters, but perhaps if those parts had been omitted the story would have been too grim. F. S. H.

## Bald Spot Saves Life

A bald spot—the bane of most men—saved the life of Capt. Ellef Tellefsen recently. The captain fell off his barge into the East River at E. 38th St. For half an hour he clung to the fender of a nearby tug, shouting for help. Exhausted and chilled, he was ready to let go when two passersby heard him. At first unable to see him in the darkness, they finally spied his gleaming pate shining like a beacon, and tossed him a life preserver—just in time.



# Seamen in Hospitals

By the Rev. David McDonald Chaplain

SAILORS in bathrobes—they are the ones I know best. "Bed-timers"—sailors who have had three major operations—they are my friends. Chronically ill seamen, convalescent seamen—they are my especial care. Visiting in the Marine Hospitals at Ellis Island and Staten Island, as the Institute's chaplain, I have an opportunity to know these men both socially and spiritually.

When you are sick in a hospital, you ask your relatives to bring you many things such as cigarettes, writing paper, crossword puzzles, magazines, books, fruit and flowers. Seamen in hospitals make similar requests and it is my privilege to be able to serve them in this practical way. It is also my privilege to minister to their spiritual needs, and during the past year I have noted a steady growth of interest in the spiritual life. More seamen patients are attending and sharing in our hospital chapel services and many bed-ridden men have sent for me to see them.

For example, Roy had been in the hospital about two years and was slowly passing away. He had assumed a short, popular name and would give his real name and address to no one. I called, and prayed with him to share a Communion service in private. He declined, but said he would "think about it." That was a good sign—"think about it." I walked out of that ward musing "What a wonderful thing it would be if more people would think about it!" The day came, shortly after, when Roy sent for me; he wanted the Holy Communion. This was the first of a series, until the last, when I found him very weak—and in his fine spirit of sharing, he just was able to whisper: "Chaplain, will you



Photo by Arnold Felin  
Chaplain David McDonald with some of the seamen patients in Marine Hospital, Ellis Island

hold Communion for George—next door?" I assured him that I would, and George seemed happy that Roy had thought of him. I conducted the funeral rites for Roy in our Chapel at the Institute, and two sisters and a brother came from Massachusetts to the service.

Another instance of individual service came last Christmas eve. Arthur had been waiting for me because I had told the nurse I would surely be there to hold service for him in his lonely little room. The carol service, with 126 attending, had closed and twenty young people had left for their usual singing in the wards. Arthur asked me about the service and the choir, and then he exclaimed: "Gee, I wished I could have heard the young people sing." "I think you will, Arthur," I replied. And, just as I was saying the last prayer of our Communion service, I recognized familiar voices on the stairs below, in "Silent night, Holy night."

I recalled pleasant memories of midnight services in beautiful

churches, with their highly trained choirs and throngs of people, but nothing has impressed me as did this Communion, in an upper room, last Christmas Eve!

I remember Maurice, a chief steward of long experience, whom the doctors had given up. I often talked and prayed with him in the hospital, and now, in his forlorn room on the lower West side, he listens to his radio while nearing the end. I held Communion for him before Christmas and sent him a Christmas remembrance.

I have often heard from the lips of patients that our U. S. Marine Hospitals are the best possible places for sick seamen. Doctors and nurses are of the best, and seamen are given the finest treatment. The social service departments of both hospitals are doing a splendid job. The Institute has the privilege of serving the spiritual needs of these seamen. I always come away with the feeling that I wish I could do more and be more to these men and boys—700 in one hospital and 300 in the other.

Many of the men who get well find their way to the Institute and when they do, seek me out and greet me as a kind of long-lost brother. They look back upon the morning services held at the hospital each Sunday. They remember how they enjoyed singing familiar hymns of their own choice. They will always remember the flowers, and how much they enjoyed sharing these with bedridden seamen, and many tell me that they had become careless and indifferent toward religion and had attended a religious service (at the hospital) for the first time in many years. The patients particularly enjoy the Negro spirituals as sung by the Crosby quartet, composed of a father and three sons employed at the Institute. The seamen heartily applaud

these singers and even burst into rousing cheers of appreciation.

Of course, it is not always easy to take an interest in hospitals and in sick men until it "comes home." I am reminded of an old ship's engineer who met me one day after I had stood beside the beds of many sick seamen and he asked me: "Well, what have you been doing, today?" When I told him he exclaimed: "Oh, don't talk to me about hospitals. I don't like to hear such things." About two weeks later our friend was ill in Beekman Street Hospital and sent for me. I was very glad, of course, to respond quickly, and I found him much changed in his attitude toward hospitals and sick seamen.

It is a chaplain's duty to visit also in the contagious wards, with mask and linen coat, and also to sit with seamen who may soon be in the Larger Life beyond. And this leads me to the funeral rite. For many years the Institute has never allowed a seaman to be neglected in this rite. I have conducted many lonely funeral services where the seaman had no relatives or friends present. In most instances I have had the U. S. Government Inspecting Officer and the undertaker attend the simple rites. We always endeavor to write and console relatives at a distance.

In closing I feel grateful for the splendid cooperation on the part of the hospital staffs, nurses, orderlies, doctors and social service workers; with their good will and cheerful ministrations; seamen have become well and have returned to their ships.

*Editor's Note:* The Institute's Superintendent, the Rev. Harold H. Kelley succeeded the Rev. Archibald R. Mansfield, D.D., as official chaplain of the U. S. Marine Hospitals in the Port of New York and occasionally he conducts services in the Hospital chapels on Sundays.



## Letters of Appreciation

MY DEAR MR. KELLEY:

The Lord has let me stay here for another birthday and still shows me with blessings so that I can send you a little gift for my friends the brave sailor boys who interest me so very much, and I love to know that 25 South Street is standing there with open doors to take them in each time they come ashore. My contribution toward its support is very small, but it gives me great joy to have a little feeling of belonging there. This year I think I am younger than last—so perhaps you may hear from me again.

Sincerely yours,

A. D.

MY DEAR MR. WESTERMAN:

I have intended to write this letter for about a year but seaman-fashion I kept postponing it. It's with regard to the men you send aboard ships as representatives of the Institute . . . Many hundreds of seamen who wouldn't have a dollar can thank these fellows for a little nest egg. I've watched and in fact on occasion assisted your men in getting seamen to "stow a little" in the bank. So please accept my congratulations for making many a guy save a buck. And in addition, there is nothing your ship visitors won't do—such as mail letters, give a hand with gear, and a ride in your station wagon.

Sincerely,

Charles S. \_\_\_\_\_

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## Tale of the "Columbine"

By Captain A. Halcrow\*

THIS is the true tale of a woman passenger aboard the smack "Columbine". The story is all the more remarkable because the "Columbine" might have become another unsolved mystery of the sea, like the "Mary Celeste", if it had not been for a bizarre combination of circumstances.

On January 30, 1886 the "Columbine", a Jersey-built fruiter, left Grutness bound to Lerwick in the Shetland Islands. She had a crew of three, and only one passenger, an elderly woman named Elizabeth Mouat who was going to Lerwick for medical attention. A squall came up shortly after leaving Grutness, the mainsheet carried away and the skipper and mate were both knocked overboard while trying to muzzle the boom. The mate managed to hold on to a rail and was dragged back on deck by the third hand. The two men decided to rescue the skipper, who was a strong swimmer and who could hold out for a long time. So they hoisted out the boat, after first hauling the stays'l bowline to windward (the idea, of course, was that the vessel would lay to.) They pulled for the place where the skipper was last seen, but apparently he had been drowned.

Then the unexpected happened. The "Columbine" had slipped away, going, full and by to seaward, with the main-boom against the port backstay, the jib drawing, all trimmed to make her self-steering! The mate and the deckhand pulled frantically for the smack, but when a sea filled and swamped the dinghy, they thought of their own danger and began to pull for the shore. Across a chain of reefs, in heavy seas, they pulled, and at last reached the beach of Voe. They cried out their story, and of the lone woman left on board the "Columbine". The one and only seaworthy vessel, "Earl of Zetland", a steamer, which

could have gone to the rescue, was laid up for repairs. At last a small steamer, after a frantic exchange of telegrams, sailed in search of the fugitive but after a long cruise, returned to report failure.

What of the woman left aboard the "Columbine"? The poor soul had been seasick in the storm and did not realize for a time her plight. She was seated on the cabin floor and heard only the raging seas outside. For the voyage to Lerwick she had carried in a basket a bottle of milk and two biscuits . . . to refresh her on the three hour trip. These meager provisions actually saved her life, for they were all the food and drink she had for the next eight days!

The remarkable endurance of this sixty-one year old peasant woman was marvelous. She allotted the food, a few crumbs each day. The "Columbine" sailed on, by a curious Fate, preserved from disaster, until at last, it hit upon the reefs of Lepsoe, Norway, where a young fisherman saw the smack and found the woman, faint from hunger and exposure. Records show that Miss Mouat lived to draw an old-age pension and died at the age of ninety-three in her native village, Grutness, having returned from Norway with money and fame after her perilous adventure. Among her money donations was twenty pounds from Queen Victoria.

So the "Columbine" came near to being a ship of mystery. Supposing that the dinghy had swamped and that both the mate and hand had been drowned on the way to shore? Supposing that the woman passenger had died, and the vessel had landed where she did with the dead body in the cabin? What wild theories or explanations advanced would have been as incredible as the actual truth?

\* Reprinted from Captain Halcrow's book "Deep Sea Plunderings", published by Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh.



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