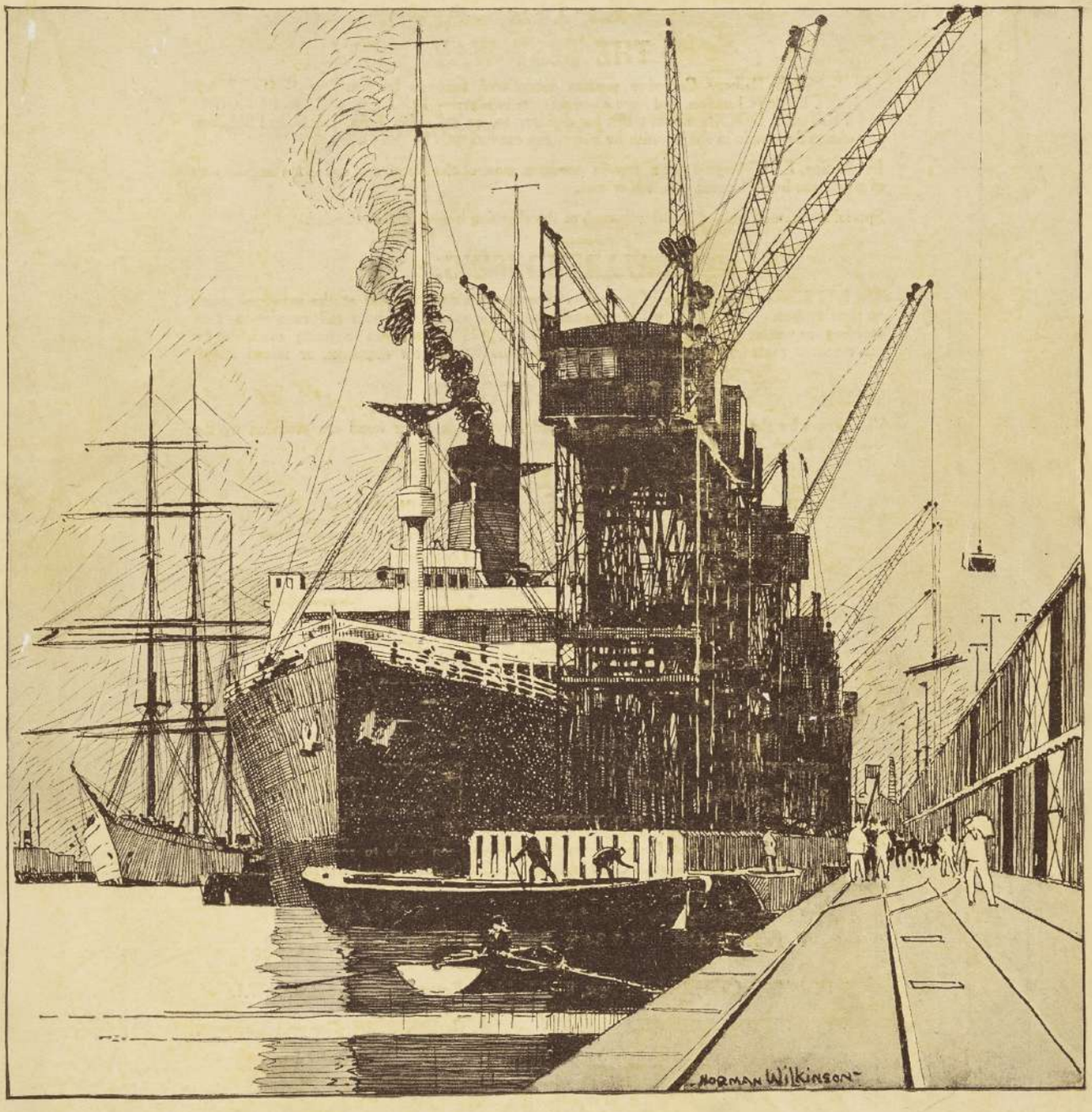
The P·L·A MONTHLY



The Magazine of the
Port of London Authority

No. 1 November, 1925 Price Six Pence.

"Where has commerce such a mart,
So rich, so throng'd, so drain'd, and so supplied
As London—opulent, enlarg'd and still
Increasing London?" Cowper.

The

P.L.A. MONTHLY

The Magazine of the Port of London Authority

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The

P.L.A. MONTHLY

Being the Magazine of the Port of London Authority

Editor—A. G. LINNEY

CONTENTS

The Editor is prepared to consider articles and illustrations suitable to the character of the magazine. A preliminary letter is advisable. The Office of Publication of this magazine is at 48, Russell Square, London, W.C. 1, and all communications (save editorial) should be addressed to the Publishers, Messrs. Newton & Company.

An Air View of the Upper Pool, London River, showing also the Head Office of the Port of London Authority [See page 19.

FOREWORD

Telephone, ROYAL 2000.
Telegrams, POLA.FEN, LONDON.

PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY,

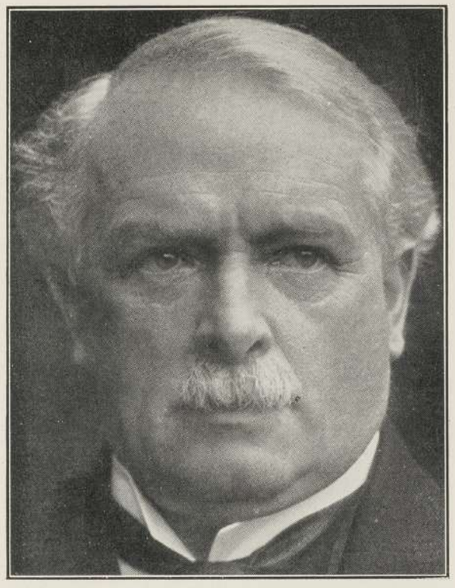
LONDON, E.C.3.

In complying with the wish of the Editor that I should write a few words in this the first issue of "The P.L.A. Monthly" I may say that it is my belief that such a publication should serve a beneficial purpose in extending a knowledge of the many-sided activities of the Port of London Authority. It is perhaps not too much to hope that it may also assist in securing the good-will and sympathy of the large business community which is so closely connected with the working of the Port and so vitally interested in its welfare.

October 1925

Richard Lindsay

Chairman.



The Right Hon. David Lloyd George, O.M., M.P., whilst President of the Board of Trade, entered into informal negotiations with the London dock proprietors, which eventually resulted in the passing of the Port of London Act, 1908, whereby the Port of London Authority was created to control the River Thames from Warden Point to Teddington and the docks in the Port of London.

A MESSAGE FROM THE RIGHT HON. D. LLOYD GEORGE, M.P.

THE Port of London Authority has worked single-mindedly in the public interest. It has achieved the advantages of impartial judgment, of stable policy, and of free enterprise. In large measure its success has been due to the men who since its inception have almost continuously constituted the Authority, and not least to the wisdom, strength and energy of Lord Devonport, the first Chairman. The future will require similar men to carry on the tradition and the work. Even in these dark days of perplexity and confusion few can doubt that the wealth and power of London will continue to grow.

London is still the hub of the commercial world ; its trade still flows to the uttermost parts of the earth ; and from outlying lands still pours a flood of goods securely channelled in the advantages of geographical position and financial aptitude. I hope that this new publication will long be able to record the success of the Port of London Authority, and the increase of prosperity in the City which the Port serves.

D. Lloyd George

THE PORT OF LONDON

Origin : Celtic London : Roman London : Saxons and Danes : Alien Merchants : The English a Maritime People

By D. J. OWEN.

(General Manager, Port of London Authority)

THE object of this series of articles is to impart some useful information on the Port of London, and it is thought that this can best be done by first tracing the development of the Port and then explaining something of its present-day activities.

On the historical side it is difficult to fix upon a starting point, for the reason that this is no new port established in recent times to serve some modern needs. Its origin is obscured by the mists of certainly more than twenty centuries and is coeval with the genesis of our national commerce ; its development is a reflection of the growth of the British Nation and Empire. In both its origin and its development it stands out unique among the seaports of the world.

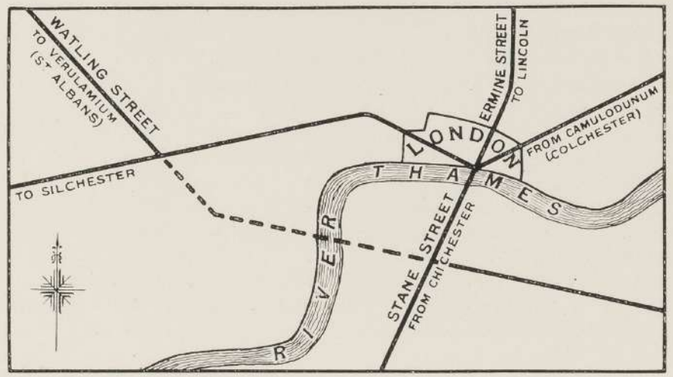
The antiquity of London is suggested by its name, which is of Celtic origin, and, while different etymological theories may be propounded, it is admitted that at the dawn of historic time on this island London was a Celtic settlement on an elevated tract of land with one side fronting the Thames and the other sides surrounded by forest and marsh. The remains of such camps, settlements, or hill-forts are to be found not only in this country but all over the continent of Europe, and archæologists tell us that they range chronologically from the Neolithic Period down to post-Roman times.

History records that London was in existence when the Romans came to Britain, so that we are driven for its commencement to a time prior to the Christian era, but when, it is impossible to say. For its birth we must look through several ages. The New Stone Age was followed by the Bronze Age, which in turn gave way almost imperceptibly to the Early Iron Age ; successive waves of immigration arrived at our shores, Neolithic man being succeeded by the Gael and the Gael by the Brython ; the primitive hunter gradually became an agriculturist, and the nomad developed into a dweller in settlements or towns. At some point during the long period covered by these events did the embryonic London come into being.

It must not be forgotten that some hundreds of years before the appearance of the Romans in Britain some of the more or less mixed races of people who dwelt there had attained a culture and a civilisation of no low standard, and had evolved a state of society in which the essential features of its institutions—agriculture, manufacture, trade, roads, coinage, and so on—were really the same as they are to-day. For example, roads or trackways had been formed between the various settlements, it being recognised that many of the famous Roman roads were constructed on the sites of the old British ways. Trade had so far developed that money was in use. The

mining of minerals—tin, gold, and copper—went on, and metal articles were manufactured. Further, a foreign import and export trade had grown up, ivory, necklaces, vessels of glass, and amber being among the imports, and corn, cattle, dogs, hides, gold, iron, tin, and lead being exported.

In the early times the ports to and seawards the Thames in those days and for long afterwards was a wide expanse of estuary. The spot could not fail to present advantages as a centre for the distribution and collection of overseas and inland traffic, the River offering a good anchorage ground for ships and the mouth of the Walbrook affording a safe harbour.



ROMAN ROADS AND LONDINIUM

from which the goods were taken were naturally the Kentish ports of Lympne, Dover and Richborough, as they were the nearest to the continent of Europe. The inland trade route from those ports was by the old Watling Street, which ran to Verulamium, near St. Albans, the ancient stronghold and capital of Caswallon, king of the tribes of south-east Britain. It crossed the Thames at Westminster, and when the capital was changed to Camulodunum or Colchester a new passage over the river was found. A bridge was constructed and was in existence A.D. 43, no doubt on the site of the present London Bridge which was the place lowest down the Thames where it was possible to make a bridge. We have to bear in mind that from that point

Tacitus, A.D. 61, is the first Roman historian who makes mention of London under its Latinised form of Londinium, not indeed as the capital of Britain or even endowed with the privileges and political rights of a colony or even a *municipium*, but as a commercial town much frequented by merchants and trading vessels. Apparently, the coming event of the commercial supremacy of London cast its shadow over 1,860 years ago. London soon became an important Roman town, and a glance at the map of the Roman roads clearly indicates its position as the centre of the road system of the country. There was considerable trade between London and the Continent, a large number of the inhabitants of the town consisting of merchants and financiers

A ROMAN BATH DISCOVERED IN STRAND LANE

who speculated in the products of the country and in imported goods.

It is not necessary to dwell upon Roman London, that being a subject on which there is an extensive literature. History tells us of the severance of the official connection between Rome and Britain at the beginning of the fifth century and of the fact that London then decayed and became a pale shadow of its former self.

The advent of the Saxons was not conducive to peace and trade, but London managed to become the chief town of the East Saxons and to make slow advances towards prosperity. Writing about the year 731, the Venerable Bede described it as a market of many nations who came by sea and land; and the importance of its overseas trade is indicated by the privileges conferred by royal charters for the entry of ships into the Port free of dues.

In the ninth century the Danes held London for some time, but it fell into a ruinous condition and was captured in 883 by King Alfred, who fortified and rebuilt it. A year or two later the development of the shipping trade of the town and the desirability of providing further accommodation for vessels coming into the Port became the subject of discussion between Alfred, Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ethelred. Ethelred was apparently given land with frontage on the Thames which he began to develop by building the Dock called after him Ethelredshithe, the name

being subsequently altered to Queenhithe when the property was given to Matilda, Queen of Henry I.

Passing on to the Norman Period, it is evident that the Conquest, while it ushered in a period of disorder, certainly brought England into closer relations with the Continent and stimulated foreign trade.

It is interesting to note that the various monarchs who held sway in the country sought to develop industry and commerce by introducing alien merchants. The alien question is no new one. As early as the eighth century the Easterlings, a band of German traders, had begun to frequent Billingsgate. In the tenth century wine merchants from Rouen settled on the west side of Dowgate, later called the Vintry, where they built a dock and in it they had the right to order the removal of any ship after a flood and an ebb of one tide. If their order was not obeyed they were empowered to cut the mooring ropes and set the ship adrift without incurring any liability for damage. In the days of Ethelred II the men of Flanders did a great deal of trade in London. Venetians and Genoese also took up their quarters here and traded in the wares of distant countries.

The Easterlings developed into the Hanseatic League, which was started in the twelfth century for mutual protection in the troubled conditions that arose out of the Continental wars. The Hanse merchants, protected by a clause in Magna Charta, began in the thirteenth century to frequent London in large numbers and, after obtaining liberty in 1236 to land and store wool imported by them, settled shortly afterwards in the Steelyard on the site of the present Cannon Street station. The foreign merchants received a special charter from Edward I in 1303 and, notwithstanding occasional interferences with their privileges, the Hanse traders gradually absorbed the greater portion of the foreign trade of London. English merchants, however, became restive in the inferior position assigned to them, both at home and abroad, and before the end of the Middle Ages the privileges of the Hanseatic League were abolished.

England began to take a leading position among the nations of the world in the sixteenth century, and to become, in fact, a maritime and colonising people. A great change took place in a hundred years. In 1400 English merchandise was mostly borne in foreign ships; in 1500, it is said, English vessels carried more than half of all the cloth exported and about three-quarters of all the other wares. The trade with the Levant became of some importance and extended largely, while commercial intercourse was opened up with Bombay, Guinea, and Brazil. After the abolition of the special privileges of the Steelyard Merchants the trade in wool was transferred almost entirely to the Merchant Adventurers, who were incorporated in 1505, and in sixty years' time (1566) the annual export of English wool and drapery to Antwerp and Bruges was estimated at over £2,000,000.

In all this development London took the lead over the other ports of the country. This is strikingly shown by the contributions made to the Customs revenue. In 1500 London contributed half of the total; Southampton 9 per cent; Newcastle-upon-Tyne 5 per cent; Bristol 3 per cent; while none of the other ports contributed as much as 3 per cent. Liverpool and Cardiff had not then come into existence as ports. The chief English mediæval ports, apart from London, were on the

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE (FROM STOW'S "SURVEY OF LONDON")

Courtesy: Maggs Brothers, Conduit Street, W.

south coast—Dover, Margate, Sandwich, Winchelsea, Southampton, Plymouth, Dartmouth, and Weymouth; on the west coast, Bristol; on the east coast, Newcastle, Scarborough, Boston, Lynn, Harwich, Yarmouth, and Colchester.

The close of the sixteenth century was notable for the rapid extension of seafaring activity, the spirit of enterprise being stimulated by the grant of monopolies to those Companies which should first open up communication with undiscovered countries. One of the earliest and most successful of the great maritime Companies was the Russian, incorporated in 1553, which established an extensive commerce with the ports of Russia as well as an overland trade with Persia. The foundation of the Royal Exchange by Gresham in 1556 marked an era in the commercial history of London, and the destruction of Antwerp by the Duke of Parma in 1585 left London without a rival as the emporium of Europe. The settlement of many Flemish merchants in England gave a great impetus to the manufacture of silks, damasks and other fine cloths, but from the time of the expulsion of the Steelyard Merchants by Queen Elizabeth in 1597 the development of the maritime trade of London was solely in the hands of the English Companies.

The incorporation of the Turkey Company in 1579, of the East India Company in 1606, and of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670, were not only the most important events connected with the growth of the Port in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but were of great consequence in the social and political history of England.

(*To be continued*)

A GREAT SPECTACLE OF SHIPS

London River's Daily Thousand In and Out

By RALPH HAROLD BRETHERTON

THINK of a boy whose garden at home was on a cliff overlooking a river—a garden ending in a fence on the far side of which the rock-face fell sheer, some eighty feet, to the road which squeezed in between the river and the cliff. Think of a strong tide racing up that river, quickly covering its muddy banks and filling the channel deep. Think, too, of ships making their way up to the docks on that tide.

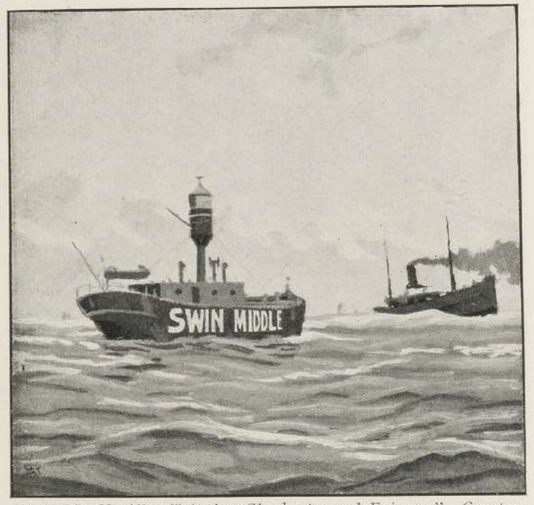
Think of all this, and you will believe that that boy was as often as he could be at the bottom of the garden, and that he looked out at the passing ships and signalled to them and came to know them and to love them. It was his pride to know something about rig in those days when ships were still rigged according to their class and even steamers carried a little sail now and again. He could tell a schooner from a brig, a barque from a barquentine—or at least he thought he could. But I don't say he can now.

That boy did not become a sailor, for all his love of ships. Two holiday trips out of his river to Ireland and back told him that the sea was no friend of his. It was the same on shorter trips; he was misery itself on the water. But that did not alter the fact that he loved ships, loved to see them passing and to greet them at the lock or the quay. He was always poking around the docks. The rattle of winches was music to his ears; the smell of cordage, timber and chaff was pleasant to his nose.

He ought, perhaps, to have gone into the shipping business—to have owned and managed ships even if he could not sail in them without being utterly wretched. But he remained a layman. His present business has nothing to do with the water and his interest in ships is purely platonic.

I can tell you that, for I am—or, I was—the boy. And the river out of which the garden looked was the Bristol Avon, if you be curious to know. Not that it was there I first saw ships. I saw them first, I suppose, in my native town of Gloucester—such ships as came up the canal to the docks there. They were, to be sure, not very big, although cargoes of a thousand tons arrived now and then.

The ships coming up the Bristol Avon to Bristol Docks were bigger. And they were more numerous in the early 'nineties, I think, than they are now. There was a considerable Irish trade then. On Wednesdays, in the cattle-shipping season, there would sometimes be six boats from Ireland in together. If coasters and Continentals and timber and grain ships crowded up on the same tide, there was traffic congestion under our garden, as the vessels came faster than they could pass in through the lock.

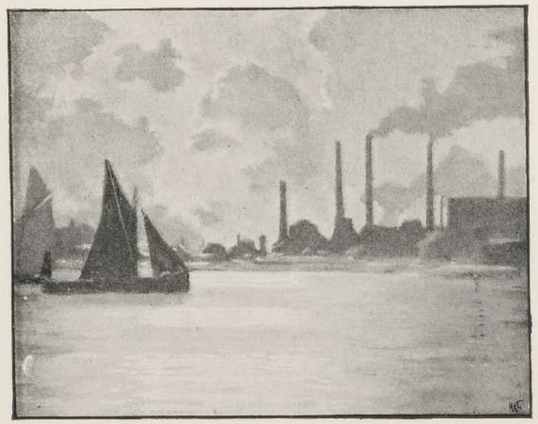


From Mr. H. Alker Tripp's "Shoalwater and Fairway"; Courtesy John Lane, The Bodley Head

So I grew used to the spectacle of shipping making its way into and out of port. I missed the spectacle when we left the garden. But still I wandered at times by the Avon and the Severn. The Severn is a fine river when the tide is in, but its waters often lie waste when you are looking for ships. Not that ships do not pass up beyond Avonmouth. They do—big ones to Sharpness and smaller ones to Gloucester and Lydney. But they pass lonely. I think that almost the loneliest ship I ever saw was a great four-master slipping down behind a tug just where the Severn becomes sea-like below the mouth of the Wye. Or, at any rate, she seemed to me lonely. Except for the tug she had to herself all the water that I could see. That would not have been strange in mid-ocean, but it did seem strange on a wide river. And though the ship was a fine sight, her solitude made me feel melancholy.

And so do those empty seas around our coasts—seas like Cardigan Bay, where you never see a ship at all. The great procession of ships which is half the interest of the sea is no more than a few, far-away and tantalizing wisps of smoke on the horizon.

The war plunged me on a river where I did find the spectacle of ships. I was stationed for some months in a little fort at the North Queensferry end of the Forth Bridge. Past that fort the battle-cruiser squadron often went in and out. Thirty or forty strong, counting smaller craft, it steamed out in a line that stretched down the Forth for as far as the eye could reach. But I was not



From Mr. H. Alker Tripp's "Shoalwater and Fairway"; Courtesy John Lane, The Bodley Head

impressed. I had no love for those monstrous, grey, freak ships. They were war-engines, and, though you respect a war-engine, it is very difficult to like it. You wish that there were no need for it. And there by the Forth I was far more interested in the few tankers and tramps that came in, and in the old paddle-tug, the *Ranger*, which crept out on mysterious errands through the boom at dawn.

Every time the Fleet passed I promised myself that when the days of peace should come I would go down to Gravesend to see real ships. For long before then I had discovered London's river, the river of all rivers that does give a spectacle of ships. I did not discover it all at once. You must be an adopted son of London for some time before you really get to know that part of the river which lies below bridge.

Just the Pool glimpsed as I paused when crossing London Bridge was all that I saw of London's port at first. Then, after a while, I ventured farther. I found the road through Wapping to Shadwell, a road which, if the tide be up and I were lucky, I might find myself forced to wait, not unwillingly, because this bridge or that was open to let a steamer in or out of dock. And it is always "a tall ship" that passes before you through a lock on the top of the tide. She towers above you and draws her length only slowly past.

Then I discovered that there was a little riverside pleasaunce at Shadwell and another at North Woolwich. And there was the pier at Greenwich, where, for a penny, I could lounge all day if I had the time. And a little beach at Dagenham where there was sand as well as shingle, and an hotel at Purfleet where dinner could be had at a table by a window overlooking a long reach of the river. Lastly, there was that walk out along the sea wall beyond Gravesend for as far as ever I had time to go.

From Mr. H. Alker Tripp's "Shoalwater and Fairway"; Courtesy John Lane, The Bodley Head

All these are places from which I may look on passing ships at close quarters. And to me, a ship-lover, there is no greater sight in London than that of her shipping—the thousand vessels that pass in and out of her port every day. Nowhere else in the world can such a movement or such a variety of ships be seen.

There are no lonely ships on the Thames, as on the Severn. Every ship that comes or goes has company. London does not take in or send out a single ship on a tide, as some ports do. She receives and despatches whole fleets

[*Concluded on page* 34

WHAT LONDON STORES FOR THE WORLD

I.—WOOL

"The Wool Clippers": Present Sources of Supply: On the Show Floors: In the Sale Rooms

By A. G. LINNEY

REGARDED in its barest simplicity, wool is nothing more inspiring than the greatcoat of that very dull quadruped the sheep. It is not merely because of alliteration that the word "silly" most naturally suggests itself in connection with sheep. Some poets, and Mrs. Hemans, have sung of pet lambs, but once the lamb has reached the grown-up stage it loses all popular or sentimental appeal, save as regards its jacket while alive, or when, after decease, it has become mutton. Stupid and unattractive as the sheep may be when alive, it is entitled to respect because of its covering. Wool was once the largest export of these islands. In the fourteenth century England was the great wool-producing country of Western Europe, and the threatened cessation of the supply to the Flemish weavers was a prime cause of the Hundred Years' War.

Five hundred years later, when the first tides of the rush for Australian gold had passed, it was the Golden Fleece of that southern continent which began to prove a profitable, if less romantic, substitute to the seeker after wealth. Presently settlers began to develop the sheep runs of the east part of Australia, and there came into being those magnificent, British-built, hard-wood ships known as "The Wool Clippers," which held their own until in time displaced by the iron clippers of the Clyde, Liverpool, and Aberdeen. Says Basil Lubbock:—"These were the days when great races home from Australia took place: not only did ship race against ship, but it was the aim and object of every skipper to get his ship home for the first wool sales in London. And in the wool trade, unlike the custom in the tea trade, the fastest ships were loaded the last, the pride of place—that of being the last ship to leave an Australian port for the London wool sales—being reserved for that which was considered the fastest ship in the trade."

Those were the days when the Thompson ships—the "Aberdeen White Star Line"—pioneers in this direction, were so famous. Those were the days (and later, too) when wool was put aboard ships in strange places, as shows the picture of a vessel being loaded from wool wagons *off the beach*. Those were the days when the bales were pressed by hydraulic power on shore, then lashed with Manila hemp. They had to be stowed as soon as pressed, for if left for a time the wool might swell and burst lashings. Lubbock says that wool freights in the

Wool Teams on the Move in Australia

early days were a penny a pound for washed wool, and that this figure fell by degrees to a farthing. To-day the freights are about a penny and one-eighth to a penny-farthing per pound.

Wool bales used to be screwed into a ship's hold like cotton bales, screws of different lengths being employed for placing between bales and lengthening until the next longer screw could be inserted. It is said that some of the old skippers jammed their holds so tight that there was danger of the seams of the vessel opening out. And the work of stowing wool was no sinecure.

" You can dunnage casks o' tallow ;
you can handle hides and horn ;
You can carry frozen mutton ; you
can lumber sacks o' corn :
But the queerest kind o' cargo that
you've got to haul and pull
Is Australia's ' staple product '—is
her God-abandoned wool.
For it's greasy an' it's stinkin', an'
them awkward, ugly bales
Must be jammed as close as herrings
in a ship before she sails."

I have written at this length more especially in regard to wool from Australia because a good deal of

glamour attaches to its earlier days. It is by no means to be supposed that other British oversea territories, as well as South America, are to be reckoned as minor sources of supply, and the appended table shows the facts as regards importations of sheep's and lambs' wool into this country in 1924.

Source	Pounds	Value: £
Australia ..	229,722,100	26,550,776
New Zealand ..	178,631,000	15,473,147
British South Africa ..	126,927,700	9,804,919
British East Indies ..	56,125,300	3,154,928
Argentine Republic ..	53,659,500	4,258,596
Other countries ..	35,615,500	2,947,055
Uruguay ..	14,315,300	1,418,457
France ..	12,950,900	1,763,911
Irish Free State	12,591,800	905,101
Falkland Isl. ..	3,327,000	296,325
Belgium ..	3,303,700	399,080
Russia ..	744,500	48,900
Turkey ..	447,500	27,443

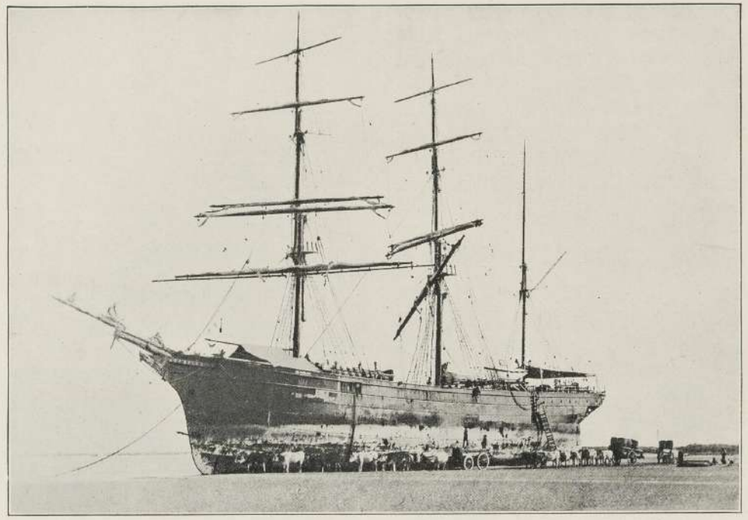
When the wool has been baled, it is conveyed on wagons to the nearest railway station, or even direct to the coast. And so the ship takes charge of the product of the vast sheep runs and there begins the ocean journey to end in London River.

" As her blocks aloft are creaking,
As her steam escape is shrieking,
In the rising and the falling
Hear the bo'sun's whistle calling
When she strips to face the gale !
With the long green track before her,
With the storm-clouds black'ning o'er
her
In the waning starlight pale.
But the Wool, ho ! *oh, the Wool, ho* !
When she's rolling and she's lifting
there will be no cargo shifting—
For 'tis Wool, ho ! *London brokers'
Wool, ho* !

Undisturbed, the bales lie in the ship's hold until she reaches London River and they make their first contact with English soil at the King George V or another of the docks of London. In charge of the Wool Department of the Authority, they come by barge alongside the enormous Wool Warehouses in the London and the St. Katharine Docks. Five, six, even seven storeys high, modern in construction, linked by bridges, and equipped with all possible provision against fire, the warehouses stand adjacent to the quays, almost oppressive in their size and solidity. On one single Division it would be possible to mark half a dozen tennis-courts ; there are thirty acres of floor space available for storage and the other warehouses afford storage room for more than a million bales. On the highest floors, eight acres (additional to the storage room) have toplighting and are used for show purposes, while in area they are big enough to accommodate forty thousand bales for inspection at one time.

Arriving on the ground floor of the Wool Warehouses, each bale has a pound sample extracted ; this is labelled and presently dispatched to a London selling woolbroker.

To the layman a bale of wool is little more than a bulky package wrapped in sacking, its *embonpoint* being kept in check by metal bands which are removed before the bale is weighed and sampled prior to being required for sale. Yet, in reality, each individual bale holds its own identity from the time it is stencilled with a mark and



An Old-Time Sailing-Ship loading Wool from Wagons on the Beach

a number before being placed on the wagon to be conveyed to tide-water on the other side of the world. That identity is most carefully preserved right up to the time when it is turned into " tops " ready for transformation into cloth. The curious markings which a bale may amass include, perhaps, a coloured band worked into the fabric, signs in black or red paint, chalkings of all sorts, and the name or initials of a steamship company.

A very busy scene presents itself on the approach of the London Wool Sales and the warehouses of the P.L.A. become the Mecca of the woolbuyers of the world, for more buyers assemble in London and better prices are obtained at the London Sales than anywhere else in the world. Those bales required for the opening sales are sent to the topmost floors. When these are being loaded with bales ready to meet the eye of buyers or merchants or importers, it is so arranged that all the wool to be sold by one broker is placed in an assigned position. The bales are stacked three high, the end from which the sample was taken being put inwards ; the hitherto unopened end is slit and the contents exposed for the expert's handling. By this arrangement the unity of the contents is, so to say, guaranteed. It is astonishing to see the ease with which these unwieldy bales, in weight perhaps three to four hundred pounds, are lifted into position. Seven men armed with specially-contrived hooks hoist each bale into its proper position.

On the day the sales begin, buyers assemble, ascend in lifts to the show floors and make their way down the gangways where the rent bales are ready for viewing. Along one gangway

Buyers Examining Bales of New Zealand Wool on a Show Floor of one of the Port of London Authority's Wool Warehouses

you may see a dozen men with catalogues—Britishers from Bradford, Huddersfield, or the West Country ; Americans from Boston ; Belgians ; Frenchmen from Lille, Roubaix, or Tourcoing ; Germans from Chemnitz, Hanover, or Blumenthal. All are covered by long white coats such as cricket umpires wear. Up and down they go, plunging a hand into a bale, pulling forth a fistful and scanning and fingering the greasy strands before they scratch figures on the pages of their catalogues. The contents of these catalogues are more or less Greek to the outsider. Here is a typical entry :— " Ex *Wangaratta*—scoured stained pieces Ewes—lot 135—Bonnie Downs—tare 11—9 bales." Continental buyers often carry a little scale card by means of which they juggle with problems of exchange rates.

The scene of activity is next to be found at the Wool Exchange in Coleman Street, where, six times a year, the London Wool Sales are held, each

series lasting about three weeks. It was in the August of 1821 that the first sale by auction of Australian wool in London took place at Garroway's Coffee House, Change Alley, Cornhill, when 330 bales from New South Wales were offered. From this modest beginning has developed an institution which has long ago made the London market a barometer to which all interests in all lands look for guidance in regard to supplies and prices of wool.

In the Sale Room of the London Wool Exchange, Coleman Street

Now as to what goes on in the Sale Room. The heads of the wool-broking firm conducting the sale sit on a dais facing a semi-circular ring of tiered seats. Every man has his catalogue before him. Business is carried out at lightning speed. Lots are often knocked down at the rate of half a dozen a minute. The auctioneer calls out the number of the lot and often states the minimum price, so many pence per pound. Frequently the instant the lot is announced a dozen bidders spring to their feet shouting and yelling their offers, sometimes reinforcing their words by excited jabs of the hand towards the auctioneer. Pandemonium appears to reign; then perhaps a halt followed by a scattering volley of higher bids. Or a mere trio jerk out staccato words. But whether the bids are isolated and few or chorussed and many, the auctioneer gathers their significance. Bang goes his hammer and the next lot is up for competition.

There are curious spurts and swirls and gusts of volubility and clamour. Every now and then, when a bid occasions surprise by its amount a

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UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM

Being Sundry Items of Passing Interest Retrieved

By "THE FERRYMAN"

IT would be difficult to find any portion of the capital of this Empire more deeply permeated with historical association than that showing in our frontispiece, an air view of part of the Upper Pool: it is indeed solid and liquid history.

The Tower Bridge is the central feature and London Bridge is visible on the extreme left. On the north bank of the river St. Paul's may just be made out in the top left-hand corner and the massive new building called Adelaide House can be discerned close to London Bridge; the Monument is rather to the right.

The long stretch of the Custom House is plain to see and the eye may pass along that bank past Tower Dock opening to Tower Hill. The portico of the Port of London Authority head office, with the great tower above, looks down on Trinity Square gardens, where Sir Thomas More, Thomas Cromwell, and Archbishop Laud were executed. The entrance to St. Katharine Dock and the fringe of tall warehouses around it give a suggestion of the character of some of the matters coming under the control of the Authority.

In the immediate foreground of the picture the rows of lighters are lying at George's Stair Tier and the less compact group is opposite Butler's Wharf. The barges close to Tower Bridge are in the vicinity of Irongate Tier, opposite Irongate Stairs at the north end of the bridge.

Almost midway between Tower Bridge and London Bridge, on the south side, may be discerned craft bunched together at Battle Bridge Bargeroads. The row of cranes on this south side extends up towards the neighbourhood of Pickleherring Street, and in the district inland from the south end of Tower Bridge (Horselydown) once stood the parish butts set up for archery in the days of Henry VIII.

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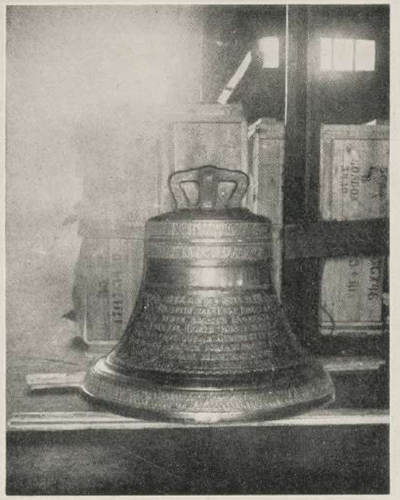
UNDER heading "London as Banking Centre," the following extracts from a speech by Mr. R. G. Hawtrey were printed in "Public Opinion":—

"London is a banking centre not only for Great Britain alone but for the greater part of the world, and in America itself business is sensitive to British credit conditions. A very substantial portion of American crops is exported and marketed in Europe, and these exports are financed in their later stages mainly in London.

"In the regulation of credit in America the financing of the crops plays a predominant and often a decisive part. A substantial part of American imports even from countries other than England is also financed at some stage by London."



THE HISTORIC BELL RECENTLY RESTORED TO FINLAND BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT

THIS item appeared in "The Evening News" of August 29th :—

"After fifty years' service with the Port of London Authority, Mr. George Poock, secretary of the Tea Clearing Office in Philpot Lane since its foundation 40 years ago, retired to-day.

"'An event which stands out very clearly in my mind is the great dock strike of 1889,' he said to-day.

"'I used to see the daily procession of strikers pass along the streets, headed by John Burns, Ben Tillett, and Tom Mann.

"'I shall never forget seeing Cardinal Manning when he came to Dock House with the Lord Mayor and the Bishop of London ; they were interviewing the dock managers in an effort to settle the strike. Cardinal Manning was a wonderfully striking figure, and everybody made way for him in the most reverential way.'"

A FEW weeks ago my eye was caught by a large bell about 2 feet high, awaiting shipment in a shed in the Surrey Docks. Enquiry showed that this bell had an interesting history. It was cast in Stockholm and had belonged to the church of Skarpans, near Bomarsund, in Finland, having been placed there in 1845.

When, at the time of the Crimean War, the fortress of Bomarsund (Aland Islands) was captured, this bell was somehow included amongst trophies brought back to England and for years, inaccurately described as having belonged to the fortress, it was to be seen in the Tower of London.

A Finnish gentleman, Mr. M. Ingman (of Messrs. H. Clarkson & Co., Ltd., 60, Fenchurch Street), who has resided in London for upwards of thirty years, approached the British Government with a view to restoring the bell to the parish church of Skarpans. The recent visit of the British Fleet to Abo, in Finland, is fresh in the public mind, and the Prime Minister considered that the friendly reception accorded to the Fleet made the occasion for the restoration of the bell singularly appropriate.

After the fall of Bomarsund fortress, Skarpans lost its position and the church whence the bell is assumed to have come no longer exists. Mariehamn, the only town on the Aland Islands, is now building a church, and it is understood that it is the general wish of the islanders that this historic bell should be hung in the new church. Thus, it may ring out over the pleasant little town and the innumerable islands surrounding it, and its notes may reach the place where it was first heard. Now, surely, it will bear an added message of goodwill and peace as shown by its restoration after exile.

LORD RITCHIE, CHAIRMAN OF THE PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY, MAKES THE FIRST CALL ON THE AUTHORITY'S AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE SYSTEM

LORD RITCHIE, Chairman of the Authority, formally opened on July 27th the Port of London Authority's new automatic telephone system which had been under construction during the previous eighteen months. The system thus inaugurated is a result of the very complete investigation into the telephonic needs of the Authority made by Mr. G. P. Preston, C.B.E., some two years ago.

Lord Ritchie inaugurated the new system by dialling the principal officer in each of the dock groups with whom he spoke. He then dialled the operator at the Royal Exchange, and passed a call for the Postmaster-General, to whom he said that he had tried the new automatic telephone system provided by the Post Office by speaking to the Superintendent in each of the great dock groups, and he was pleased to be able to say from his own experience and reports that had been furnished to him, that the new system was working very satisfactorily, which fact was undoubtedly due to the excellent work done by the Post Office.

The Postmaster-General replied : "I am very pleased to hear that the new automatic installation provided by the Post Office is working satisfactorily, and I view with great satisfaction the foresight of the Authority in deciding to adopt a system of so extensive and efficient a character.

" In providing for rapid communication from point to point over the whole area of the Port, the new automatic installation, which is of the very latest design, should prove a valuable addition to the machinery of the Port of London. At the same time I hope that

MR. G. P. PRESTON, C.B.E., THE PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY'S EXPERT ADVISER ON TELEPHONES

it may serve to lighten the labours of those responsible for the great work done by the Port. The new installation is in keeping with the national importance of such a great organisation as that of the Port of London Authority ".

An inspection of the plant and of the switchroom at the head office was then made.

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AN observant person noted that on July 25th, the day when final tests preparatory to the opening of the P.L.A. automatic telephone system were carried out, the Evening Lessons contained the appropriate text, " Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

THE P.L.A. possesses two teams—of grain barges—twenty-two in all. Somebody decreed that they should be christened on the M system, and the classical side is represented by the *Medea, Mentor, Morpheus, Mars, Medusa,* and *Minerva.* A daintier touch is provided in the *Minnie, Mary, Martha, Marjory, Margaret,* and *Madge.* I suggest that the series might continue with the *Melisande,* though she ought not to pay attention to the line of the song, " Drink deep of the water, Melisande ! "

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ONE curious morsel of historical information which links London with Liverpool may be unknown to most of our readers. In olden times when English kings were pressed for ready money, they were in the habit of raising the wind by selling charters and rights to their subjects.

Liverpool had a charter as long ago as 1229. In the fourth year of the reign of Charles I that monarch was in financial straits and obtained a considerable loan from the Lord Mayor and the citizens of London. He obtained an additional sum of £25,000 by assigning to certain trustees acting for the City of London no less than three hundred manors and estates. These included Liverpool, with its ferry tolls, market tolls, anchorage tolls, etc. The Liverpool of that day was " Litherpole." Civic officials and merchants were not accustomed to acquire royal manors and estates merely for the joy of possession, so London sold Liverpool to the Molyneux family and a deed of sale in the year 1635 records that the sum of £450 cemented this bargain.

WAPPING OLD STAIRS

Dibdin's Song: Dr. Johnson's Advice to Boswell

By CHARLES G. HARPER

AS the Thames rolls down to the Port of London, and becomes to all sailormen, not " the Thames," but " London River," those wharves and queer waterside assemblages of buildings that, for the most part, have been swept away from the riverside in the more polished and polite quarters of London, reappear. The river knows no sedate or spectacular embankments below Blackfriars Bridge, although, to be sure, the Tower Wharf is a pleasant promenade, and the new King Edward Park at Shadwell is a beauteous and interesting lookout over the fairway.

Apart, however, from these two instances, the waterside amenities are far to seek; and it is business that solely rules. The black-browed wharves, the narrow lanes and the grim little " stairs " that have been swept away from the waterside above Blackfriars reappear, and great, starkly, utilitarian warehouses, rising to lofty heights and shouldering one another closely, form the chief feature. Either side of the river is in like case. I do not say that the stark usefulness of these unlovely buildings is without interest. Far from it. Indeed, it is only by exploring into these regions that you can visualise the great wealth and the vast activities of the Port of London.

I will here draw your attention to just one celebrated spot amid these purlieus. It is that flight of stairs leading down to the tide which is so well known in maritime song, story and legend as " Wapping Old Stairs." But where, many Londoners will perhaps ask, is Wapping ? It is a little district and shy and elusive; but it is quite close to the Tower Bridge. Indeed, you have but to go past St. Katharine Docks, and there you are: in Wapping High Street. But, mark this singular fact: no one there will be able to direct you to Wapping Old Stairs, because to the Wappingites themselves they are " Wapping Dock Stairs." They are, however, the identical stairs referred to in Charles Dibdin's song. They are, by the very look of them, of a hoary old age: stairs that are of stone, in two parallel flights, one broad and public, leading out of the High Street, the other narrow and private, issuing from an early Georgian mansion, whose outlook upon the water gives a certain dignity to the scene. On the other side of the alley is the public-house with the odd sign of " The Town of Ramsgate."

You may wait long on the gravel of the foreshore at low tide—and it *is* gravel, not mud, and astonishingly clean for the foreshores of these parts—and see never a sailor put off from the stairs or come to them. For the old sea-salty aroma of Wapping has long since passed; and the days of Nelson and of tar and sails and cordage have gone by. The Wapping of the present age is not a little grey. Nothing

WAPPING OLD STAIRS *Sketch by C. G. Harper*

recognisably like a sailor will be found there, and the stranger wonders if indeed Wapping and the neighbouring Ratcliffe Highway, now called "St. George's Street," ever could have deserved the ill reputation they once had. They did, in fact, deserve it. When the sailors came ashore, they found all the land-sharks waiting for them. Vainly, however, would the dens now be found to which Jack ashore was lured. All is decorous and drab, except just the river end of the alleyway where Wapping Old Stairs duly will be found. It is a quaint little scene, with something of the savour of romance yet clinging about it.

There are, of course, other historic incidents connected with Wapping: but it were now vain to seek that "Red Cow" public-house in Hope and Anchor Alley, where the fugitive Judge Jeffreys, skulking in disguise as a sailor, was seen and recognised before he could escape, and so was taken prisoner and committed to the Tower that is so handy. "Explore Wapping" was the advice of Dr. Johnson to Boswell; and, although it is today a very different Wapping, the injunction it followed will be not unprofitable.

The famous song, "Wapping Old Stairs," is not, sooth to say, so very redolent of Wapping. The words are not so racy of the place, or of cordage and tarry breeks as might be expected. It is merely an assertion on the part of Molly to her Tom that she declares she has been true to him since they parted at Wapping Old Stairs; together with a reproach that he should

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RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIES: PAPER

Foreign Trees make English Paper: Huge Mills in Kent

By J. L. GREAVES

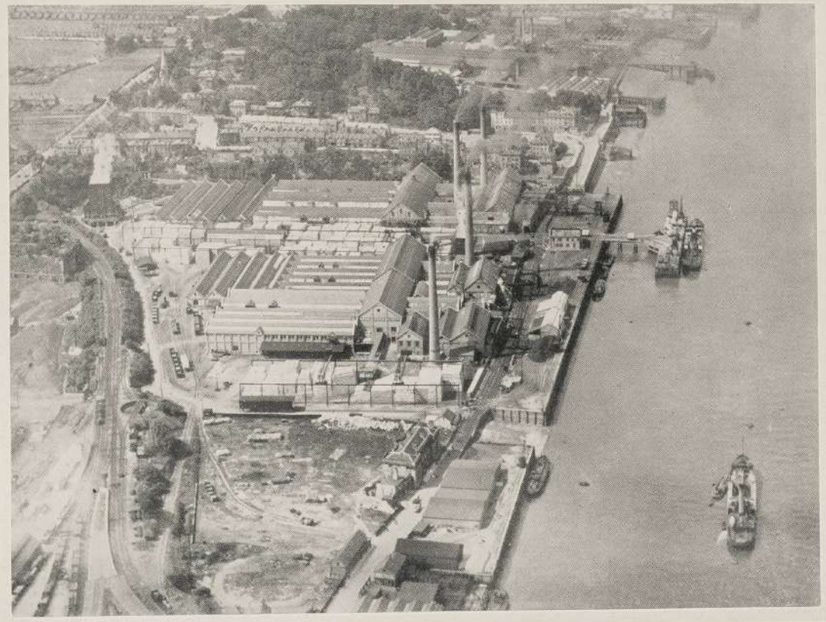
UNTIL half a century ago, or even less, paper was made in this country and elsewhere mainly from rags. Times have changed, however, and to-day cheap papers are, with very few exceptions, made from wood. For the uninitiated it may be mentioned that the wood used in paper-making is either "ground" or "mechanical," to use the technical terms. In other words, coniferous woods are ground in a special machine by means of a grindstone and this produces the cheaper forms of wood pulp of which "news" paper mainly consists. Chemical pulps are produced by chemical means, the wood being boiled, dissolved and desiccated, thus producing a higher grade of pulp. Both classes of pulp are indispensable in the modern paper mill producing "news" paper or printing qualities. As a matter of fact, wood pulp also finds its way to other mills to a smaller extent.

In olden times the paper mill was very largely concerned in the preparatory end, and in the days of rags and in the early days of esparto more people were employed on picking, washing, disinfecting, cutting and boiling than were actually engaged on the subsequent operations of making paper. There are, of course, rag mills to-day, but we are chiefly concerned with the mills using wood pulp. It is of interest to know that in the Gravesend district the mills on the Thames are producing over six thousand tons of newsprint per week, and this volume will very shortly be enlarged by nearly another thousand tons weekly.

The aim of the up-to-date paper mills producing "news" paper and cheap printings is to gain output, and when it is realised that machines erected recently on the Thames are over 240 inches wide and capable of producing nearly 500 tons per week per machine, running at a speed of over 800 feet a minute, it is possible for the layman to gather some idea of the conditions under which a modern paper mill works.

It is also important to remember that the raw material universally employed in producing "news" paper to-day is wood and the whole of this comes from oversea; thus it is a notable fact that in the majority of British mills, particularly those on the Thames, which are amongst the most important in the world, and certainly among the most modern, the raw material comes from Sweden, Norway, Canada, Finland or Germany; the china clay comes largely by water from Cornwall; the coal is sea-borne from Wales or from the East Coast. When the paper is produced a very large proportion of it is carried by water to London or elsewhere, and at the moment a large tonnage is going abroad, mainly to Australia or New Zealand.

It is significant that all the paper mills built in Great Britain during recent years have been in close proximity either to the Thames or to the



AIR VIEW OF THE IMPERIAL PAPER MILLS, GRAVESEND, WHERE PAPER FOR THE AMALGAMATED PRESS PUBLICATIONS IS MANUFACTURED; DEEP WATER SHIPS CAN RAPIDLY LOAD OR UNLOAD

East Coast—mainly the former—and it is agreed that one of the finest mills to-day in existence is that of Messrs. Edward Lloyd, Ltd., Sittingbourne and Kemsley. These great mills, turning out approximately 3,000 tons of paper per week, have the advantage of perfectly-equipped landing wharves on the Swale, an arm of the Thames, where ships of considerable capacity can be unloaded with rapidity at all tides. Here also the paper may either be shipped oversea or barged as required.

Another mill of outstanding importance is the Imperial Mill, Gravesend, one of the latest and best in the world, and this invaluable adjunct to the Harmsworth undertakings is right on the Thames. The landing stages are literally at the front door of the mill, the success of which has been phenomenal; in general lay-out it certainly has no superior. "The Daily Telegraph" mills, at Dartford, and Messrs. Reed & Co.'s new mill at Aylesford, are also within easy reach of the River.

Within a stone's throw, so to speak, of the Imperial Mills a new two-machine mill is now being completed for the well-known firm of Messrs. W. V. Bowater & Sons, Ltd., whose name is a household word in the paper trade. Here, two giant machines are at this moment being installed, one of them being the widest paper-making machine in the world; it will make

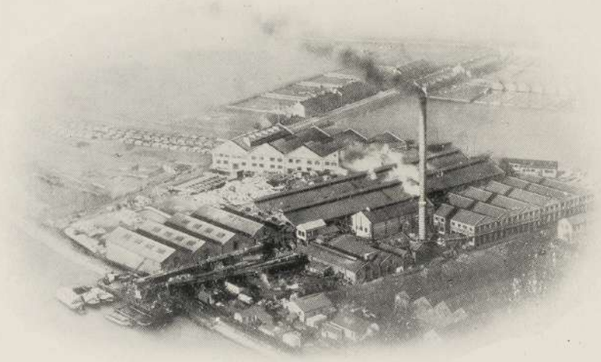
a finished sheet no less than 244 inches wide. It is estimated that within a few months the output of this enterprise will be no less than eight hundred tons a week. In many respects this mill is unique, as it is electrically driven throughout, and the proprietors

WOOD PULP UNLOADED AT THE IMPERIAL PAPER MILLS, GRAVESEND

have obviously taken full advantage of the fact that the mill is right on the River; a capacious landing stage is now approaching completion from which sea-going craft will be loaded and unloaded by means of the most modern handling appliances. A further feature here will be a direct canal into the mill itself from the River and barges of large capacity will load or unload under the roof of part of the mill.

Yet another mill which is worth more than passing reference in an article of this kind is the Empire Mill, which has been re-modelled and is now recognised as fit to compare with any other mill of its class. This great undertaking was originally promoted by Wallpapers, Ltd., but a few years ago it changed hands and to-day is concerned in the production of "news" paper and printings, and the output has been materially increased recently. This mill was designed by a famous American engineer and here, as with neighbouring mills, the design included a landing stage; in connection with this certain engineering difficulties were encountered. These difficulties were successfully overcome and the landing stage has certainly been one of the most profitable features of the mill, bearing in mind—as already stated—that the raw material must come from overseas and a very large proportion of the output is water-borne.

There is another paper mill of more



AIR VIEW OF THAMES BOARD MILLS, PURFLEET: BOTH FACTORY AND WHARF HAVE BEEN CONSIDERABLY EXTENDED

modest pretensions near by, at Northfleet, also on the Thames. This mill is noteworthy because attempts were made there years ago by a famous Swede to produce chemical pulp for paper-making on a considerable scale. After various vicissitudes the chemical pulp-making was dropped, but paper-making has continued there ever since, and this mill is to-day in better shape, probably, from the profit-earning point of view than ever before.

It is also interesting to note that during the past twelve months the first serious effort to grind wood for paper-making is being undertaken at mills which are fed by the Thames. Messrs. Edward Lloyd, Ltd., have a considerable experimental grinding plant, and a London firm is engaged in putting down a grinding plant on the Medway. When the latter is in operation probably more wood will be ground in England than ever before. It is important to observe that all these great modern mills have chosen positions served by London River.

Although Kent is rich in paper mills, large and small, Essex contains only two mills, a small one inland and the other on the River. The Thames Board Mills are at Purfleet, almost facing the great mills at Gravesend on the other side. Under the able management of Mr. E. B. Fiske, the Thames Board Mills are now the biggest of their kind in Europe and extensions are constantly being made. These mills are right on the River and a large proportion of the traffic in and out is by water.

This brief article will serve to show that particularly for the London market the situation of the paper mills within easy reach of the consumers' machine rooms or store warehouses is a first consideration. It is equally obvious that mills thus served by London River have considerable advantages over those less favourably placed and it is significant to realise that all the great paper mills constructed within recent years have been, with one exception, on the Thames.

PORT ENGINEERING NOTES: IMPOUNDING

FOR the efficient accommodation of modern deep-draught ships in the Docks it is necessary to maintain the water at what may be described as permanent spring tide or impounded level, for vessels must neither take the ground nor be held up for lack of depth.

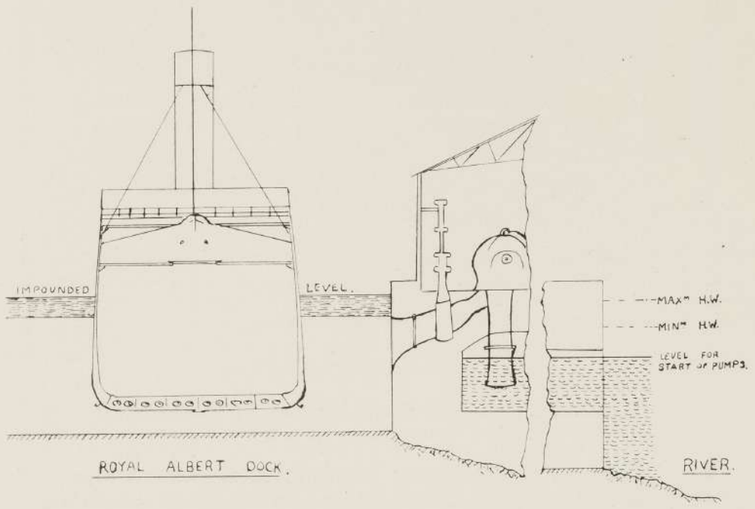


DIAGRAM ILLUSTRATING HOW ADDITIONAL DEPTH OF WATER IS OBTAINED BY IMPOUNDING

In the River the average difference between the heights of high-water spring and high-water neap tides, which alternate fortnightly, is 6 feet; the artificial maintenance of constant high level over the vast water area of the larger Dock groups is no mean feat, especially when it is realised that there is considerable loss of water by locking operations and leakage, frequently 6 to 12 inches per tide, which may be cumulative for days together on falling tides. Resort is, therefore, had to impounding the water within the lock gates by maintenance pumping with the aid of powerful pumps.

This feature of the dock engineering functions efficiently and quietly without the casual visitor to the Docks being aware of its necessity, yet without the vigilant care exercised the value of the Dock systems would be greatly impaired.

In the Port of London impounding is necessary at four groups of docks, viz., London; West India; East India;

Royal Victoria and Albert and King George V. It will be applied more extensively at the West India and Millwall Docks when these are unified into one system by the projected improvements about to be carried out.

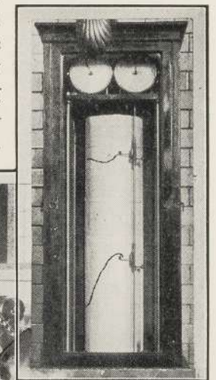
The largest task is that at the Royal Victoria and Albert and King George V Docks, where 244 acres of water are kept approximately 15 feet above Ordnance Datum, involving the raising of the level an average of $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet, the water being drawn from the river at Dollar Bay, Gallions, through a tunnel 150 yards long and $14\frac{1}{4}$ feet high by $13\frac{1}{3}$ feet wide to a sump chamber beneath the Pump House on the east quay of the Royal Albert Dock Basin, pumped, and discharged into the dock 10 feet below the quay.

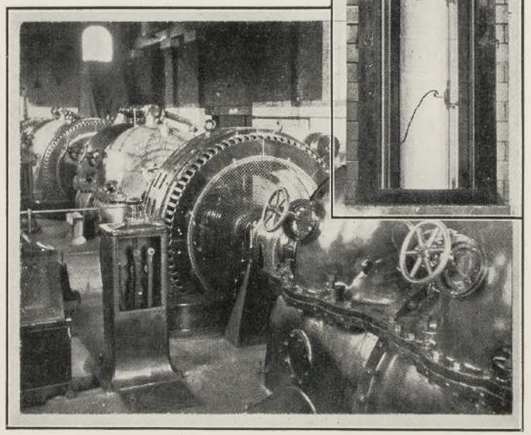
This installation is one of the largest in the world, and consists of three independent, centrifugal, revolving disc turbine type pumps, each designed to discharge separately an average of 15,000 cubic feet of water per minute against a head varying up to 14 feet during six hours of lowest neap tides. Each pump is driven by a high-tension alternating-current electric motor of the slip-ring induction type, developing 430 b.h.p., taking power from the Corporation mains at 6,000 to 6,600 volts, two-phase, 50 cycles.

The main pumps are charged by two motor-driven single-throw pumps, 14 inches diameter by 10 inches stroke, capable of starting any one of the main pumps in $7\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, and to enable the load to be gradually taken, three hydraulic sluice valves, 5 feet 10 inches diameter are fitted in the main discharge outlets.

The controlling key of this powerful installation, with its numerous auxiliaries, is the automatic recording instrument which simultaneously charts the height of the tide in the river and the level of the dock water, serving as a warning when the dock level is ebbing below standard, upon which, as soon as pumping level is reached in the river—roughly, at half-tide—the pumps are started.

Some idea of the volume of water dealt with will be gleaned when it is stated that each pump is served by a suction pipe 5 feet 10 inches diameter, with two discharge pipes 4 feet 2 inches diameter, branching to single discharges increasing to 8 feet diameter, at the dock outlets. Thus it is always high spring tide at the Docks, watched by the silent recording instrument as sentinel over the waters.





GALLIONS IMPOUNDING STATION AND (RIGHT) AUTOMATIC TIDE RECORDER

THE PORT OF LONDON AT WEMBLEY: A RETROSPECT

By A. E. WILDEY

ANY doubts which may originally have existed in the mind of the writer as to whether a Port Authority's exhibit at the British Empire Exhibition would prove attractive to the public, vanished within the opening week. From first to last, over a million people visited the Port of London Authority's pavilion in the Palace of Engineering (later the Palace of Housing and Transport). The space occupied by the pavilion was sufficient to allow of an exhibition hall and cinema display hall. In the style of the building several discerning visitors saw the hand of Sir Edwin Cooper, the architect who designed the Authority's head office.

The unique collection of old prints and paintings displayed in the exhibition hall, made real the story of the growth of the docks and the life of the River in earlier times.

Here, too, were staged models of the Royal Victoria and Albert and King George V Docks, of the Tilbury Docks, and of the proposed passenger landing stage at Tilbury. This last attracted the attention of Her Majesty the Queen during one of her visits; she asked questions about it, and was pleased when informed that borings in connection with the scheme had already been begun. His Majesty the King warmly admired a painting by Charles Dickson of the River Pageant in 1921; His Majesty remarked that he well remembered how gusty a day it was on that occasion.

There is a Chinese proverb which says that "A picture is worth ten thousand words," and the moving-picture exhibited in the Authority's cinema hall assuredly bore out the wisdom of the East as summarized in the expression. The film had been made under the direction of one of the Authority's officers by the Gaumont Company and it proved of such absorbing interest that few who came in to see it departed before the conclusion—and as the film took three-quarters of an hour to show this was genuine tribute to its merits. The subtitling was cleverly done; for instance, there flashed on the screen the statement that over 2,750,000 tons of grain are imported into London annually and there followed immediately a picture of the hold of a ship from which grain was being sucked by pneumatic tubes. Then came the granaries and the various delivery operations in progress.

"More than 750,000 tons of sugar are imported into London every year," said the screen, and then flashed out scenes of the landing of a sugar cargo and the weighing and sampling of it. That 70 per cent of the total imports of frozen and chilled meat brought into the kingdom every year arrived in London Docks astonished nearly everybody who saw the film, and the methods of handling, storing, and despatching the meat evoked many interesting comments. Practically every import business dealt with in the port was

included in the film; bulking tea; sampling rubber and tobacco, wines, &c.; sorting ostrich feathers; setting up wool for show purposes.

The huge totals of the shipping tonnage using London was another source of amazement to visitors, who had not realised that over forty-five million net register tons of shipping (1924) entered and left the Port of London, nor that London's oversea imports and exports (1923, the latest figures available) represented one-third of the total for the United Kingdom.

The educational value of the Authority's film to the youth of Great Britain cannot be doubted. Many thousands of young people from various schools in London and the Provinces saw it, frequently by special appointment after teachers in other schools had mentioned its interest. One elderly lady, after witnessing the film, expressed her pleasure and remarked, "Now I know what the letters P.L.A. really stand for. I always thought they meant 'Passengers' Luggage in Advance!'"

THE EXTERIOR OF THE PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY'S PAVILION AT THE BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION

By participating in an impressive manner in the British Empire Exhibition the Port of London Authority may claim to have loyally played their part in the great combined effort to maintain and increase the trade of the Empire, and the cumulative effect of this mighty Imperial gesture should be a strong and material force in furthering the interests of the British Empire.

"WHAT LONDON STORES FOR THE WORLD—WOOL"

Concluded from page 18

shrill whistling chorus testifies, amid laughter, to the general opinion. There may be exciting international struggles —uniforms may be wanted for men fighting in a little war 2,000 miles away ; somebody is short on a contract made months back. Who knows ?

To the uninformed spectator it is all very noisy and puzzling and breathless. Thousands of bales change ownership in quick time during an afternoon, for at the London Wool Sales the buyers who assemble represent cosmopolitan interests, and what occurs in Coleman Street has a repercussion all over Australia and New Zealand, in South Africa, in South America, in Asia Minor, whence the fleeces have originally come; as well as in the cloth-manufacturing districts of various countries.

Pick up the paper next day and you find all the clamour and pother and excitement brought down to cold type something like this :—" The position of merino wools showed little alteration, prices for the best greasies being on a par with those current at the close of the last series, while broken and pieces were frequently 5 per cent above that level." Or again and more cryptic :— " Victoria. WA in diamond. Imperial (174 bales). Scoured comeback, 37, 37½ ; fine crossbred, 31, 27½, 25, 23, 22, 21, 19½, 18½, 17½ ; lambs 15, Wambrook (188 bales)—Greasy merino combing, 29½, 28, 27, 26, 25 ; broken, 28 ; pieces, 26 ; bellies, 23 ; locks, 13 ; greasy crossbred, 19½."

Within twenty-four hours of the close of an afternoon's selling the bales may be leaving the Port of London Authority's warehouses in motor lorries or rail vans, or be going over the side into steamers for dispatch to the Continent or to America—wonderful testimony to the efficiency and organisation which prevail at the Wool Warehouses at the London and St. Katharine Docks. Before very long those bales which have kept their individuality will have arrived in regions where people talk in strange lingo about yarns and tops and noils and laps and wastes. A little longer and that wool which started out as the greatcoat of Mr. Sheep may be transformed into greatcoats for Mr. Man.

"A GREAT SPECTACLE OF SHIPS"

Concluded from page 12

—barges, coasters, colliers, tramps, freighters, passenger liners.

So, if anyone wants to see a procession of ships moving not so far off-shore that he is unable to see their colours, I would tell him to get down to the banks of some lower reach of the Thames. And his wonder as they come, and still come, will be that Man, in his faith, can have built so many. And when you think of how much material and work go into the making of a ship, it really is wonderful that Man should have put so many into the water. They are countless along London's river—and they are very good to see.

I write, I have said, as a layman. Many who read know far more about ships than I. But, perhaps because I was brought up in ports, I have a great longing at times for a sight of shipping. That longing I have learned can be satisfied better on London's River than anywhere else. But there are many Londoners who think they know London well and yet they are unaware of the magnificent spectacle of ships down below bridge.

LONDON—THE WORLD'S GREAT WOOL MARKET

The Port of London Authority render all services preparatory to the Sales in London. Wool received from ship, conveyed to warehouse, set up for show, and delivered. An expert staff is engaged in the Authority's warehouses, and their accuracy and impartiality in weighing, taring, sampling, and other operations are implicitly relied on by the trade.

Wool on the Show Floors of the P.L.A., London Docks

The Port of London Authority's Wool Warehouses at the London and St. Katharine Docks are spacious and efficiently equipped. The floor area is over 30 acres and the show floors alone can accommodate 40,000 bales at one time.

During 1924, 1,100,000 *bales of wool were imported into London and* 860,000 *bales passed through the Public Sales.*

THAMES WHARF CHARTS

I HAVE found absolutely invaluable for learning about the River, and more especially about the close-packed factories, wharves, and warehouses which fringe its banks, a series of three charts, "Thames Wharf Charts"; these are quite encyclopædic in the mass of information which they provide. Tiers, moorings, docks, dry-docks and sheds in the Docks, headway under bridges, roads and railways, tide details are all indicated. This indispensable trio of charts is arranged so that one shows the River from Teddington to Vauxhall Bridge, the second from Vauxhall Bridge to Barking, and the third from Barking to Hole Haven.

The second sheet furnishes a wonderful glimpse of the dock system of the greatest of all ports—London—for all the big groups beginning with St. Katharine right down to the King George V catch the eye at a sweep. On this chart two features grip one's imagination. From Tower Bridge to the western limit of Limehouse Reach wharves and warehouses form an unbroken line, witness to the unexampled commercial activity of London River. The other matter which proclaims itself is the extent of the interlinking docks and ponds forming one whole under the name of Surrey Commercial Docks.

These charts are the work of Messrs. Imray, Laurie, Norie & Wilson, Ltd. (156, Minories, E.1), who are really to be congratulated upon this valuable aid to the commercial community.

A. G. L.

WAPPING OLD STAIRS

Concluded from page 24

promise to "walk in the Mall with Susan from Deptford, and likewise with Sal."

A far more characteristic ditty is "Meg of Wapping," the lady who married seven husbands :—

"'Twas landlady Meg made such rum flip,
Pull away, pull away, my hearties
At Wapping she lived, at the sign of the 'Ship,'
Where rare tars meet in such jolly parties.
She'd shine at the play and jig at the ball,
All rigged out so gay and so topping;
For she married six husbands, and buried them all,
Pull away, pull away, I say!
What d'ye think of my Meg of Wapping?"

This remarkable lady married in succession "Old Bluff," "Blear-Eyed Ned," Sam, "Bold Ben," "Dick so neat," another gentleman whose name, I regret to say, has escaped me, and finally "Honest Tom Trip." Most of these came to a bad end, but Tom Trip survived her, and, inheriting her accumulated wealth, married the girl of his heart. The song reflects very accurately the old ideals and mentality of the roystering Wapping of the time of George the Third.

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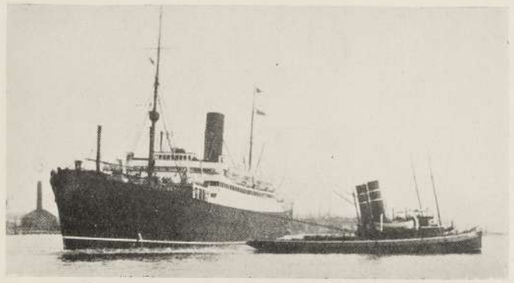

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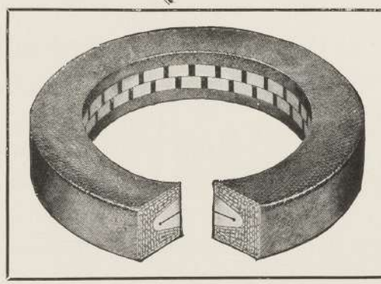

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