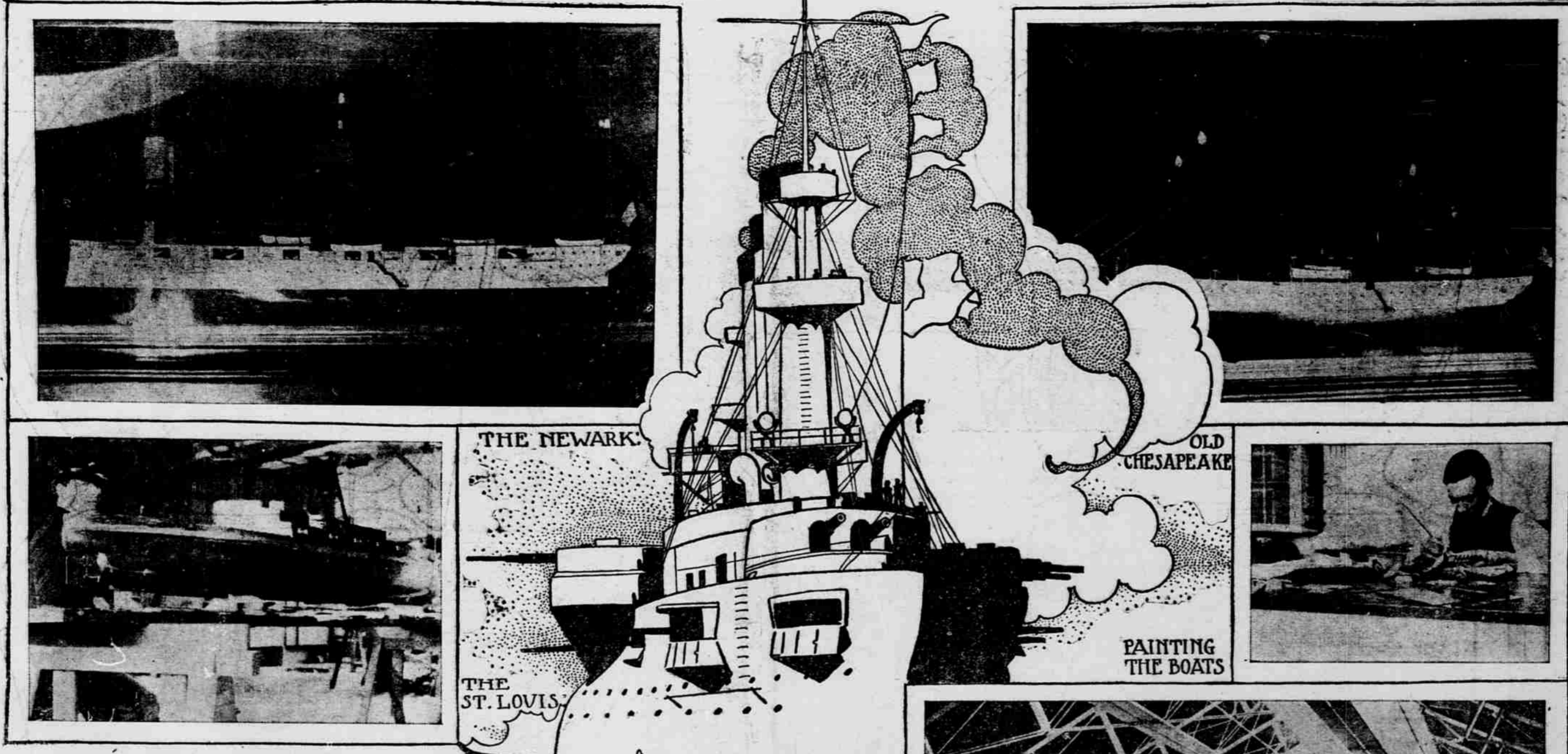


THE MINIATURE NAVY OF THE UNITED STATES



Tiny Craft in Every Line Counterparts of Great Battleships Whose Names They Bear. A Number of Skilled Workmen Employed on the Construction of Uncle Sam's Lilliputian Marine Service—Work Done by Tools as Delicate as a Dentist's Instrument.

The ram Katabin, the terrible Venusius, the old Maine, which was destroyed in Havana harbor; Admiral Dewey's flagship, Admiral Schley's Brooklyn, the New York, the monitor Miantonomoh, the Baltimore, the Atlanta, the Petrel, the Monterey, the Bancroft, two Kearsarogs, the old and the new; the Annapolis, the Nashville, the Yorktown, the Helena, the Columbia, the Massachusetts, the Texas, the Iowa, and the Oregon—"round-the-Horn" fame—this is the array, such as has never been seen before anywhere on earth—all the best ships of our navy; in fact, every boat except those on the stocks and the four old-timers—the Wheeling, Chesapeake, Newark, and Denver, in the corridors of the Army and Navy Building, are displayed at the Charleston Exposition.

In Process of Construction.
The new Maine, the St. Louis, the West Virginia, and the monitor Arkansas are in the process of construction in the most fascinating corner of the navy yard. These ships are not manned and never will be, because there are no pigmies in our nation and no wooden men.

The navy yard at Washington is replete with interesting things. The building of the great guns and their carriages, the model testing tank, and a thousand and one other naval appliances. Most of these works are on view to the stranger on presentation of a pass procurable at the entrance to the yard, but few climb to the third floor of a building way off to the side where is the only shipbuilding establishment maintained by Uncle Sam himself, the plant where he builds the models for his navy, is maintained.

Work Begun.
As soon as the contract for a new ship is let a copy of the plan, drawn to the

scale of one-quarter of an inch to the foot, is sent to the Washington Navy Yard, and the work on the miniature begins. It takes about a year, and sometimes more, when the lines or any of the equipment is changed from the original draft, to turn out one of these little vessels.

They are, in all lines and appearances, counterparts of the great ships whose names they bear, and under construction they are inspected in every detail just as the real vessels are. There are half a dozen skilled workmen constantly employed on this little navy, most of them having been engaged in the work since its inception, about fifteen years ago. The department is under the direction, along with the testing tank and the models thereof, of Naval Constructor D. W. Taylor.

When Navy Was Proposed.
It will be remembered that when the new navy was proposed it was the most difficult thing to get many of the representatives in Congress from the inland country to vote for the necessary appropriations. The Navy Department conceived the idea of building these little craft, miniatures of the proposed ships, to display throughout the interior, where, by most people, an ocean steamer is never seen, and thereby work up an interest among the constituents of the Representatives and Senators. The plan was remarkably successful.

First Built of Steel.
At first the ships were built of metal, the guns turned out of steel, the masts of tubular steel just as the real ones are, and even the little launches carried on the ships—in themselves but six or eight inches long—were equipped with

tiny iron imitations of engines. The labor of turning down the little guns and the masts on lathes required the skill of a jeweler and a jeweler's equipment, so exact were they that the most expert and cautious craftsman could find no flaw. And all that beautiful work, to continue the exactness of the likeness, was covered with the usual colors, hulls white, superstructure drab and guns black. But when the original purpose was accomplished, when the work of the new navy had gotten fairly under way, it was decided to continue, for other reasons, the making of the models before the ship itself was built, or simultaneously with its building. As the steel construction of the little boats was slow and expensive, and, after all, concealed by so much paint, that the underlying material could not be determined, it was decided to adopt wood as the basic material.

Made of White Pine.
The hulls, masts, guns, small boats, anchors—in fact everything except the rigging and the smallest fastenings are

made of soft white pine. It has many advantages; it is cheap, light, firm, elastic, easy to whittle, and quicker of manipulation than steel or any other wood.

For the hull two-inch strips of board are glued together, the grain running in different directions to give the boat an even stanchion. The hull is cut out rough by machinery to the approximate shape and then trimmed down to the exact measurements by hand. All the other work is done by hand with the penknife and tools as delicate as dentist's instruments.

Great Precaution Exercised.
The propellers taper down to a sixteenth of an inch, and if the slightest chip is taken out, the edge of the blade is condemned and thrown away. The anchor, which has an average diameter of an eighth of an inch, is as perfectly carved. The little steam launches and the lifeboats are the most delicate. They are dug out of solid blocks of wood to a thickness of less than a sixteenth of an inch. The little seats in them are veritable splin-

ners. But just as delicate are the rapid-fire guns in the turrets. Even the little hand cranks for grinding out the continuous fire are put on. This delicate fineness is true of every line of the detail.

With continual work, each man on the branch in which he is most expert, the force can turn out but about three ships a year.

Serves as Model.
As soon as it is completed it is taken down to the Bureau of Construction and Repair of the Navy Department, where it serves the constructors, inspectors, and others in directing the lines, alterations, etc., in the building of the battleship itself. In this line, as in most others, an ounce of demonstration is worth a pound of explanation—and half a pound of illustration. The models are of infinite value in this regard, and when they have served their purpose they form the most interesting naval exhibit, and about the only one this department could make—especially inland, where a war vessel cannot be sent.

When war was imminent the Spaniards sent to New York their finest fighting ship. Perhaps the object was to intimidate us. At present there is little danger of our warring with any European nation, but our entire miniature navy was sent to Paris to display our fighting strength at the recent exposition there.

The boats had to be packed very carefully and very carefully handled en route. But no one in Paris had had experience handling a navy so small, and the individuals who did the packing for the return voyage must have thought they were handling men-of-war that could withstand the force of powder and shot. In consequence, the fleet was in a terrible plight when it reached America. It was only with diligent effort that it could be made presentable for the Pan-American Exposition. The Maine looked like it had followed in the fortune of its namesake. By the time the boats are ready to go to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, the St. Louis will be ready to go with them to that city.

Prince Henry is the originator of a

plan of equipping each ship with a miniature model of itself that can be taken apart and used to demonstrate mechanisms that cannot be conveniently reached. The Philadelphia and one or two other ships have been fitted with such models by our Navy Department, but the plan has not been generally adopted by us.

There is another separate and distinct class of models that we build. These are, on an average 20-foot hulls of the new ships proposed. They are built of the same material, and as far as the surface detail is concerned, are as perfect as the others.

Above deck they are not completed, but are just weighted to the proportion of superstructure of the proposed vessel would be. The hulls are for the purpose of determining the power needed for the speed required. The great testing tank of the navy yard has a wide reputation. The first thing the visitor asks to see is the tank where the little ships are tested. They have no propelling power themselves but are towed by a carriage that runs along over the tank.

INTERESTING CHAT IN WASHINGTON CAMERA CIRCLES.

STOLEN, is the sensational heading of an advertisement in a recent photographic magazine, in which some information is wanted of a fine Goetz lens, the property of the Reflex Camera Company, of Yonkers, N. Y.

It is evident that the lens thief is still at large, and until he is safe behind the bars it will be wise for all the owners of fine lenses to keep them in a safe place, for the lens thief is one of the shrewdest criminals at large, and his capture will be a great boon to the camerist.

The lens thief never seems to make any mistakes. No one sees him while at work, and you cannot find his photograph in any of the rogues galleries of the country; the first that you know a valuable lens has been stolen and then you realize that the lens thief has paid you a visit.

A few years ago a valuable Ross lens was stolen from the studio of the Capital Camera Club. The detective bureau was appealed to, but no one could give a description of the criminal and the police were helpless. A short time afterward a lens valued at \$250 was stolen from the rooms of the Boston Camera Club while an exhibition was being held in the club rooms, and this lens has never been recovered. While the numbers of lenses sold are registered by many of the dealers, the identity of the lens is soon lost if it is removed, and there seems to be no protection from the thief if the lens happens to be within reach when that sly and light-fingered individual is on hand.

Among the members of the Camera Club mentioned in this column a short time since as visitors to our new possession I omitted to mention the fact that Mr. E. E. Geaster is now in the Philippines, in charge of the proof room of the Govern-

ment Printing Office at Manila. Mr. Geaster is a modest individual so far as his photographic work was concerned, and his work has never been seen at our club exhibitions for the reason that he could not be induced to believe that his pictures had sufficient merit for exhibition purposes.

Among the coming photographic exhibitions are those by the Los Angeles (Cal.) Camera Club from May 1 to May 10, and the exhibition of the Syracuse (N. Y.) Camera Club, from April 15 to April 19.

It is to be regretted that the distance is so great to Los Angeles as to almost prohibit the sending of framed pictures, on account of the heavy express charges, as this exhibition is worthy of liberal support because of the efforts which are being made to secure a high grade exhibition. It is worthy of notice that the jury of selection, composed of five members, has four artists among the jury, an indication that the art side of photography is to be given due attention.

The exhibition at Syracuse is, however, within the reach of all, and pictures may be sent framed or unframed, to suit the choice of the exhibitor. Three of the exhibition committee are members of the Postal Photographic Club, and this should secure the support of several members of the Postal Photographic Club who reside in this city.

The exhibition of lantern slides shown at the Capital Camera Club last night comprised slides from the Denver (Col.) Camera Club and the Minneapolis (Minn.) Camera Club. Considering the slides separately, the work of the Denver club seemed better technically as well as artistically, and the portrait slides of Miss Ella Badger were fine examples of pleas-

ing poses combined with artistic lighting. The interiors of ancient Mexican churches by Capt. C. E. Palfrey were interesting from a historic standpoint, as well as fine examples of careful slide making.

Sumner W. Mattison contributed several interesting slides from negatives made among the ruins of the cliff dwellers and the pueblos of Colorado. His slides, with the descriptions accompanying them, described the customs of the Moki Indians, the supposed descendants of the ancient cliff dwellers. The description of the flute ceremonies and the snake dance which Mr. Mattison witnessed and made negatives of were full of interesting facts.

Among the slides of the Minneapolis Club the work of Mr. C. F. Potter, Jr., the editor of the "Western Camera Notes," and of John Hadden, the associate editor of the same magazine, were the most noteworthy. Mr. Potter had several pleasing landscapes, some of which were toned to a red chalk color. Mr. Hadden contributed several slides from the Scottish Highlands, records of a recent trip to that picturesque country, the most pleasing of which was a fine view of Loch Katrine.

A recent editorial in one of the leading New York Sunday papers mentions an exhibition of "pictorial photography" composed of the work of some thirty persons classed as photo-secessionists, and refers to these persons as having seceded from the ranks of amateurs for the reason that they claim higher artistic feeling for their work. The statement is also made that these secessionists claim that their work is only slightly removed from the work of the painter, but that the artist-painters class them as pretenders. This is really very amusing, for to

those who are conversant with the history of amateur photography in this country it is well known that these same secessionists belong to the class so well described by Mr. Osborne L. Yellott, in the November issue of the "Photo Era," in an article entitled "The Rule or Ruin School of Photography."

This small coterie, who claim for themselves all the knowledge relating to the artistic side of photography, have in the past been so fortunate as to be represented on the juries of selection in some of the most prominent photographic exhibitions of this country, and it is probable if they had been content with their honest efforts they would still form a strong factor in the shaping of the policy of future exhibitions, but unfortunately for them, the mass of photographers at last concluded that the exhibitions were becoming too strongly colored with the personal work of these aspirants, to the exclusion of the work of others equally proficient in the interpretation of the pictorial side of photography.

Naturally there was an awakening, and juries were selected outside of the circle of the alleged secessionists, and thus being deposed, they declined to exhibit, although they were notified that their work would be hung as invited work, and not subject to inspection by the jury of selection.

It is fair to assume that the reason they refused to exhibit in an exhibition in which their coterie was not represented on the jury was based upon the principle that they would not support an exhibition that they could not control. Finding themselves stripped of the authority they now claim to be seceders. Is it not very strange that a person sum-

marily dismissed always states that he has "resigned?"

One of the recent improvements in development is a light-tight metal box for the development of cartridge films. The film with its paper backing is placed inside of the box in much the same manner that a film is inserted in a camera. The film is covered by closing the box and then unrolled, the paper back stripped, and the film soaked for a short time in water. The water is then siphoned off and developer poured in and the film developed by a time method; the developer is then siphoned off and the fixing solution poured in, and when fixed sufficiently the box can be placed under a spigot and washing completed without removing the film from the box.

This invention will prove a great convenience to those who use films and do not have the opportunity or the inclination to use a dark room, but the most interesting feature of picture making, the pleasure of watching the development of the negative, will be entirely lost.

From Mr. John Hassall, an English artist, comes the suggestion that photography may be used to advantage and profit in the making of posters. Mr. Hassall should know that photography has long been used to some extent in this country in the preparation of novelties in advertising, although its use for complete posters may never seem desirable.

It is claimed by this artist that there is a reaction in poster making in favor of black and white work, on account of the expense of color work, and for this reason the use of the camera in poster work is strongly recommended.

As one of the abuses of photography it is stated that in the short space of two weeks over 300 photographic counterfeit-

THE MAN WITHOUT A LANGUAGE.

A PRETTY good story was told by an immigration official during the course of a lecture at the Rifles Armory last Friday evening. The lecturer was exhibiting types of arrivals at the Ellis Island immigrant station in New York, with stereoscopic views.

Said he: "There came a fellow on a ship one day, whose face and make-up was such that the inspection officers could not for the life of 'em determine the particular country whence he came. An Italian interpreter was called to ask him the usual questions. He looked blank. A German interpreter gave the alien a greeting. Then he was accosted in turn by linguists in Slavak, Scandinavian, Greek, and Finnish, but nary a sign from the immigrant that he understood a syllable. Not less than twenty-two different tongues and dialects were tried in an effort to discover the nationality of that durned new arrival, who looked as though he might have hailed from any one of the countries where all of those languages were spoken, but he didn't say a word, just stood and stared at the officers who were interrogating him. Finally he turned to them and exclaimed: 'For the love of God, is there anybody around here who can speak English?'"