

REPORT  
OF THE  
SUPERINTENDENT OF THE NAUTICAL SCHOOL.

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*To the Honorable Board of Education :*

GENTLEMEN—I respectfully submit the sixth annual report of the New York Nautical School. The school is held on board the ship *St. Marys*. I assumed the superintendency on the 15th of January, at which time there were eighty-two young men on board. These were classed according to merit, and instructed in the ordinary branches of instruction pursued in the Public Schools. About one-half of the number of pupils had been at sea during the summer cruise of the ship, and showed evidence of careful training in seamanship and discipline.

The annual examination by Mr. Henry Kiddle, City Superintendent of Public Schools, was held on April 13th last, there being present several of your honorable body. After the examination the pupils were given fifteen days' leave of absence, during which time the ship was prepared for sea.

On the 13th of May we left New York for the summer cruise, having on board one hundred and forty-seven boys. Several

days were spent in Long Island Sound to acquaint the new boys with their duties on board ship.

We arrived at Lisbon on the 20th of June.

Whilst there a vessel arrived with yellow fever on board. The vessels in the port were forbidden entering any other ports on the western coast of Europe, so I was obliged to return to the United States, stopping at Funchal, Island of Madeira, for six days.

Whilst in the port the boys were allowed to go on shore as often as possible, but their exercises and studies were kept up. On the 2d of August we arrived at New London. From that time until the 3d of October, when we arrived off New York, we were cruising in Long Island Sound and Narragansett Bay. The boys were instructed in manœuvering ship, and handling sails under all the varying circumstances of a voyage.

The 13th of October the school was examined by the Council of the Chamber of Commerce and a Board of Seamen Experts. A large number of the very best of active American ship masters, besides some retired, were present to witness the exercises aloft by the boys.

They all expressed themselves as highly gratified, and immediate application was made by some of them for boys for their employ.

The graduating class, numbering fifty-six, were presented with their certificates by the President of your Honorable Board. The ship was taken to her berth, foot of Twenty-third street,

East River, and prepared for the winter course. When the graduating class left the ship we had remaining seventy-seven boys.

The following is a statement of the attendance for the year :

On board January 1st, 1879.....	82
Admitted during the year.....	101
Discharged and withdrawn, and gone to sea without graduating.....	40
Graduated.....	56
Average for the year.....	117

I am able to report that of the graduates forty-four, up to January 1st, have gone to sea. Of the remaining twelve three have signified their intention of going to sea after the holidays.

A new spar deck is being put on the *St. Mary's*. As far as we can ascertain, the ship is in good condition, but before starting on another summer's cruise I would recommend that she be docked, and that her bottom be examined. She is well provided with cordage and sails, the Navy Department having, last spring, given the Executive Committee sails and stores to the value of (\$3,000) three thousand dollars.

I herewith append the reports made by the Council of Nautical School of the Chamber of Commerce of New York, marked A.

Also the report of the expense of the School for the year ending December 31st, 1879, marked B.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

HENRY ERBEN,

Commander U. S. N.,

Superintendent.

## REPORT OF EXPERTS.

NEW YORK, *October 25, 1879.*

Messrs. CHARLES H. MARSHALL, JOHN S. BARNES, THOMAS P. BALL,

*Council of the Nautical School of the Chamber of Commerce:*

GENTLEMEN—We have the honor to state, that at your request, we have made an examination of the Nautical School Ship "St. Marys," and have to report as follows :

On Friday, October 17, 1879, we proceeded on board the ship, then lying at anchor in the East River, off South Ferry.

The scholars of the School were first mustered in line on deck, for personal examination. Each boy had his bag of clothing. We made careful inspection of the person and clothing of each, and found both very neat and clean. The general appearance of the boys impressed us most favorably. They were as fine looking a set of boys as could have been gotten together on any occasion.

We next proceeded to examine the ship herself. We found her a model of order and neatness ; clean as a new pin, and in every way well calculated for the work and purposes of the Nautical School.

The boys were now assembled on the lower deck, where we found many specimens of their handiwork, such as knots and splices, both in hemp and wire, sewing and sail work, both round and flat seams. Some of the sail work would do credit to the best sail lofts.

Some of the boys in our presence gave examples of their expertness in knotting and making long and short splices, eyes, bends, &c., and, generally, in doing such things of this nature, as are required to be done in the emergencies of ship-board.

We examined them in regard to making lead and log lines, boxing the compass, steering, &c. ; also in navigation, as to their knowledge of the various simpler methods of finding the ship's position at sea, latitude by meridian observation, longitude by chronometer, the connections of the sun's altitude for dip, parallax, semi-diameter, and refraction, and how each was to be applied. Each seemed to vie with the others in readiness to answer the questions put ; and we were much gratified to note their general proficiency in these particulars.

We also made careful examination as to the messing and berthing of the ship, and into her general sanitary condition, also as to the food served out. We find everything relating to these particulars to be perfectly satisfactory.

We were unable, from want of time, to attend upon the afternoon evolutions with sails and running rigging. In regard to these, Capt. James Parker will make report.

We cannot close this report without a word as to the general discipline of the ship, and the general content which seemed to prevail amongst the scholars, with their officers and teachers.

We closely questioned several of the boys in regard to this latter point, although the generally happy looks and actions of all on board seemed to make such an inquiry useless. The Superintendent and his assistants seem to combine those happy qualities which enable them to preserve the strictest discipline, without interfering with the happiness and contentment of their subordinates.

To the Superintendent, Commander Henry Erben, U. S. Navy, and the other officers of the ship, we desire to express our pleasure at the readiness they exhibited to enable us to make our examination thorough and complete.

As shipmasters of long standing and experience in the merchant service, we desire to say, that we consider that all those who have been instrumental in bring the Nautical School to its present working efficiency, are deserving of the gratitude of their countrymen. "By means of this school a boy, who faithfully profits by it, may become in two years, nearly as efficient a sailor as, under the old system, in nearly half a lifetime."

We earnestly hope that the Navy Department will not fail to allow the "St. Marys" to remain in her present sphere of usefulness, as a Nautical School for the merchant marine.

Thanking you, gentlemen, for the honor and pleasure you have conferred upon us, by choosing us for the performance of this duty,

We are, very respectfully,

(Signed,)

GEO. W. GILCHRIST,

JOSHUA F. GROZIER,

*Shipmasters.*

I have carefully read all that has been written by Captains Gilchrist and Grozier, and fully concur in the same. I was, at your request, present and witnessed the performance of the evolutions with sails, spars and rigging. These were as follows: Sails were loosed to royal; all sail was made to royals inclusive; royals were taken in, and top-sails single reefed, hoisted and top-gallant sails set over them; top-gallant sails were taken in and top-sails double reefed; reefs were shaken out of the top-sails and the top-sails hoisted; a reef was put into the fore-sail, then shaken out; all sail was then clewed up and furled. From the time "all hands loose sails" was called until the sails were furled, as above stated, only forty minutes elapsed.

The undersigned has had long experience in the Navy, and there were several other naval officers on board. We were all agreed that we had rarely seen those evolutions performed in less time, or with less noise and confusion, than in this case. It indicated a high state of discipline and efficiency.

Yours, very truly,

(Signed,)

JAMES PARKER,

*Secretary American Shipmasters'  
Association.*

## REPORT OF SURGEON.

N. Y. NAUTICAL SCHOOL SHIP *St. Marys*, }  
 NEW YORK, *December 1, 1879.* }

SIR—I have the honor to report, that among the most important diseases which have occurred on board this vessel within the last twelve months were—cartarrh, diarrhoea, intermittent fever, influenza and tonsillitis.

The average duration of these cases was very brief, and they have all ended in complete recovery. In addition there have occurred a considerable number of slight injuries and temporary indispositions, producing no incapacity for duty, and of not sufficient importance to be recorded.

The average daily number of persons on board during the year has been about one hundred and twenty-two.

It is apparent that the percentage of sickness is very small, probably considerably less than it would have been among the same individuals at their homes. The reasons for this are, that the ship has been kept unusually dry (dryness and health always going hand in hand on shipboard,) well ventilated, comfortably warm, and all other possible precautions for the prevention of disease carefully observed.

All candidates for admission into the Nautical School are very carefully examined physically, and only those in perfect health passed. It is taken for granted that every boy admitted will become a sea-faring man by profession. While the hardships and exposure of a sailor's life develop the highest de-

gree of health and vigor in sound persons, they are generally very injurious to those of delicate constitutions.

The rule is, that no boy weighing under one hundred pounds or measuring less than five feet in height is received, but this is not rigidly adhered to, well developed, vigorous boys being admitted, even though they do not fully reach the above standard.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed,)

J. W. Ross,

*Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. N.*

Commander HENRY ERBEN, U. S. N.,

*Commanding Nautical Schoolship St. Marys.*

## A.

*To the Chamber of Commerce :*

The Council of the Nautical School of the Port of New York respectfully beg to report: That on the morning of Friday, October 17, 1879, the annual inspection of the School was begun by your Council, aided by Captains Geo. W. Gilchrist and Joshua F. Grozier and the Secretary of the Ship-Masters' Association, Captain James Parker, who, at the request of the Council, acted as experts in conducting the examination. This report is herewith appended.

Since the last examination a change has been made in the command of the *St. Marys*, which is now in charge of Captain Henry Erben, U. S. N., with whom are associated the following officers: Lieut. John J. Hunker, Executive Officer; Lieut. George A. Norris and Lieut. Arthur P. Osborn, Instructors, and Surgeon John W. Ross.

The needs of the service having made the retirement of Captain Phythian necessary, according to the decision of the Hon. Secretary of the Navy, it is a subject of congratulation that Captain Erben should have been selected as his successor. Your Council feel assured that the excellent management of the School under Captain Phythian will be perpetuated with Captain Erben, and in this regard, that there will be no impairment of its efficiency or results.

Your Council will not enter into the details of the examina-

tion, which occupied several hours, and which, in most respects, resembled those of former years. In the report of the Committee of Experts will be found a full account of the methods employed to test the capacity of the boys in seamanship and other branches of nautical study which make up the course of education, and in these the scholars exhibited a satisfactory proficiency.

The usual neatness, order, and discipline were observable, as well as the existence of those relations between the scholars and their officers, which form so important an element in the conduct of a school like this.

The health of the young men has been unusually good, and your Council need only refer to the report of Surgeon J. W. Ross, accompanying this, as a corroboration of this statement.

The average daily attendance has been 122, and the graduates this year number 56. Three of the latter received the medals annually awarded by the Chamber. Their names are as follows: James Joseph Wait, silver medal; Burr Charles Miller, bronze medal; John James Crewley, bronze medal: and to James Edward Stone a marine glass was given, by the officers of the ship, as a reward for excellence in marling spike seamanship and sail-making.

The closing exercises were attended by a large number of ladies and gentlemen, which is a gratifying evidence of the interest felt in the school. Hon. William E. Dodge made the presentations of the rewards, and the boys were favored with

addresses from the Rev. Dr. John Hall, Rev. Dr. George D. Wildes, and Mr. William Wood and Mr. David Wetmore, of the Board of Education.

Your Council have no special recommendations to make as to the future conduct of the School, which is undoubtedly in a satisfactory and progressive condition. The Board of Education have every disposition to provide liberally for the maintenance of the School, and your Council are not aware that anything is needed which will not be furnished on the proper application. A proof the utility of this effort to improve the character of the men employed in our mercantile marine is shown in the growing favor with which the scholars are regarded by ship-owners and masters, and the desire to obtain them after their graduation. All of whom have been provided with positions on vessels sailing from this port for distant countries.

Your Council, in closing, will allude to the change contemplated by the Honorable Secretary of the Navy, in the substitution of the *Supply* for the *St. Marys*. It is to be hoped that the representations of this Chamber, added to the expressions of individuals on the subject, will prevent such change, for it is the opinion of your Council and of the Committee of Experts, that it would be destructive of the best objects of the School, and probably of its very existence. The reasons for this opinion were formulated in the resolutions passed by this body on the 2d October, 1879, and need not be again given. Your Council think that for the present

at least no attempt will be made to disturb the existing status of the School.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

(Signed,) CHARLES H. MARSHALL, }  
JOHN S. BARNES, } *Council of the*  
THOMAS P. BALL, } *Nautical School.*

NEW YORK, January 7, 1880.

B.

SUPPORT OF NAUTICAL SCHOOL, 1879.

Salaries and Wages.....	\$13,118 87
Provisions.....	6,321 74
Drugs.....	271 31
Ship Chandlery.....	1,408 11
Repairs.....	92 77
Towing and Pilotage.....	136 63
Oil.....	221 93
Stationery.....	86 70
Summer Cruise to Lisbon, &c.....	1,291 66
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	\$22,949 72
Fuel.....	428 67
Supplies through the Depository.....	242 67
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	\$23,621 06

## Liabilities Account, 1879:

Provisions.....	204 47
Ship Chandlery.....	13 78
Repairs.....	2,212 95
Stationery.....	8 00
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	\$26,060 26

E. and O. E.

NEW YORK, *January 22d*, 1880.

## REPORT

OF THE

## SUPERINTENDENT OF TRUANCY.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF TRUANCY, }  
 HALL OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, }  
 NEW YORK *December 31st*, 1879. }

*To the Honorable the Board of Education:*

GENTLEMEN—I have the honor to submit the following report of the work of the Department of Truancy for the year ending December 31st, 1879, as follows:

## SCHEDULE

*Showing a summary of the work done by the Agents of Truancy during the year.*

Total number of cases investigated.....	10,501
Children kept home by parents.....	2,863
“ “ “ sickness.....	1,938
“ “ “ poverty.....	408