

The usual ships' boats have been reduced in number and replaced by motor boats.

The visitor to a battleship is privileged to see something of the interior of the great floating fortress, is likely to discover that manipulating it is a little like playing with edged tools. Such a visit adds to the reverence for this type of fighting machine and helps one to appreciate the merit of the feat of taking a fleet of these machines around the world and returning them in as good condition as when they were dispatched. There is an atmosphere of preparedness for eventualities that helps one to realize the hecatombs of edde which is maintained.

The great complex mechanism is ready to respond to a single spoken word with a volley of death-dealing missiles. It is an exemplification of the modern amended form of the Golden Rule. "The unit others as you would that they should do to you, but do them first," saying emphasis on the last clause. The perfection of the mechanism for the "doing" has involved the creation of new elements of danger to the manipulators of the fighting machine.

On a battle ship compressed air has been put to service and carried with it a fresh danger. On two or three occasions the readers of the morning papers have found the taste of their breakfast neutralized by front page stories recounting how ten or twenty American sailors, crowded up in a turret while at target practice, suddenly met their death from a "flareback." Compressed air has been adopted to prevent such an accident in the future.

The air in the turret itself is compressed in a moderate measure in order to keep the coffin-shaped compartment free from smoke and gas. The gases and burning grains of powder and fragments of powder bags sometimes remain in the breach of the gun after its firing and make the deadly "flareback" as the breech plug is swung back and forth in the gun. The big guns are now equipped with tubes for turning a current of air at a pressure of more than two hundred pounds to the square inch.

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