

FORUM

MATHEMATICS AND THE COLLISION REGULATIONS

IN the January number of the *Journal* (15, 104) Captain Wylie discussed the apparent conflict which existed between certain mariners and certain mathematicians about the efficacy of the Collision Regulations at sea. His contribution, which followed the publication in the October 1961 number (14, 379) of Mr. Calvert's 'Comparison of Two Systems for Avoiding Collision', was discussed in the same number by a selection of seamen and mathematicians. Followers of this controversy will be interested to read the remarks of Captain Weekes, printed on p. 271 on the subject of how imperfectly many ships' officers understand relative movement. Commander Clissold's suggestion, printed in the same discussion, that Calvert's and Hollingdale's rules should be tested on marine radar simulators is also to the point.

GENERAL REFERENCES

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- Calvert, E. S. (1960). Manœuvres to ensure the avoidance of collision. *This Journal*, 13, 127.
- Garcia-Frias, J. (1960). Anti-collision radar sectors. *This Journal*, 13, 316.
- Morrel, J. S. (1961). The physics of collision at sea. *This Journal*, 14, 163.
- Hollingdale, S. H. (1961). The mathematics of collision avoidance in two dimensions. *This Journal*, 14, 243.
- Wylie, F. J., Sadler, D. H., Gauw, J. A., Clissold, P., Wynne-Edwards, C. J., Bini, M., Freiesleben, H. C. (1962). Mathematics and the Collision Regulations (Forum). *This Journal*, 15, 104.

Philosophy, Rules and the Collision Problem

from Dr. J. S. Morrel

CAPTAIN Wylie begins his paper by evoking a philosophic vision: a planet full of colliding ships, all staffed by mathematicians. He concludes by rejecting, on behalf of mariners, the help of the mathematicians. The maritime record also evokes a vision: the colliding ships are somewhat fewer, but the main difference is that every one is staffed by persons other than mathematicians. The latter vision rather implies a need for help from somewhere.

Since a resort to mathematics no more makes a mathematician than a resort to philosophy makes a philosopher, I shall assume that the Wylie controversy is not