

A Land of Pure Delight

American Girl Abroad

Adeline Knox

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1872

We two alone. — “ Good by.” — “ Are you the captain of this ship ? ” — Wretchedness. — The jolly Englishman and the Yankee. — A sail ! — The cattle-man. — The Jersey-man whose bark was on the sea. — Church services under difficulties. — The sweet young English face. — Down into the depths to worship. — “ Beware ! I stand by the Parson.” — Singing to the fishes. — Green Erin. — One long cheer. — Farewell Ireland,

WE were going to Europe, Mrs. K. and I — alone, with the exception of the ship’s company — unprotected, save by Him who watches over the least of his creatures. We packed our one trunk, upon which both name and nationality were conspicuously blazoned, with the necessities, not luxuries, of a woman’s toilet, and made our simple preparations for departure without a shadow of anxiety. “ They who know nothing, fear nothing,” said the paterfamilias, but added his consent and blessing. The rain poured in torrents as we drove down to the wharf. But floods could not have dampened our enthusiasm. A wild Irishman, with a suggestion of spirituous things in his air and general appearance, received us at the foot of the plank, one end of which touched earth, the other that unexplored region, the steamer. We followed the direction of his dirty finger, and there fell from our eyes, as it were, scales. In our ignorance, we had expected to find vast space, elegant surroundings, glass, glare, and glitter. We peered into the contracted quarters of the ladies’ cabin. One side was filled with boxes and bundles ; the other, with the prostrate form of an old lady, her head enveloped in a mammoth ruffle. We explored the saloon. The purser, with a wen and a gilt-banded cap on his head, was flying about like one distracted. An old gentleman similarly attired, with the exception of the wen, — the surgeon as we afterwards learned, — read a large book complacently in one corner, murmuring gently to himself. His upper teeth lacked fixity, so to speak ; and as they fell with every word, he had the appearance of gnashing them continually at the invisible author. There was a hurrying to and fro of round, fresh-faced stewards in short jackets, a pushing and pulling of trunks and boxes, the sudden appearance and disappearance of nondescript individuals in slouched hats and water-proofs, the Stirling about of heavy feet upon the deck above, the rattling of chains, the ‘ yo-ing’ of hoarse voices, as the sailors pulled at the ropes, and, with it all, that sickening odor of oil, of dead dinners — of everything, so indescribable, so never-to-be-forgotten. Somewhat saddened, and considerably enlightened upon the subject of ocean steamers, we sought our state-room. It boasted two berths (the upper conveniently gained by mounting the stationary wash-stand), and a velvet-covered sofa beneath the large, square window, which last we learned, months later, when reduced to a port-hole for light and air, to appreciate. A rack and half a dozen hooks against the wall completed its furniture.

The time of departure arrived. We said the two little words that bring so many tears and heartaches, and ran up on the deck with the rain in our faces, and something that was not all rain in our eyes, for one last look at our friends ; but they were hidden from sight. There comes to me a dim recollection of attempting to mount to an inaccessible place : of clinging to wet ropes with the intention of seeing the last of the land ; of thinking it, after a time, a sense-less proceeding, and of resigning ourselves finally to our berths and inevitable circumstances. Eight bells and the dinner bell ; some one darkened our doorway.

“ What’s this ? Don’t give it up so. D’ye hear the dinner bell ? ”

“ Are — are you the captain of this ship ?” gasped Mrs. K., feebly, from the sofa.

“ To be sure, madam. Don’t give it up so.”

Mrs. K. groaned. There came to me one last gleam of hope. What if it were possible to brave it out ! In a moment my feet were on the floor, but whether my name were McGregor, or not, I could not tell. I made an abortive attempt after the pretty hood, prepared with such pleasant anticipations, and had a dim consciousness that somebody’s hands tied it about my head. Then we started. We climbed heights, we descended depths indescribable, in that short walk to the saloon, and there was a queer feeling of having a windmill, instead of a head, upon my shoulders. A number of sympathizing faces were nodding in the most remarkable manner, as we reached the door, and the tables performed antic evolutions.

“ Take me back !” and the berth and the little round stewardess received me. There followed a night of misery. One can form no idea, save from experience, of the horrors of the first night upon an ocean steamer. There are the whir, and buzz, and jar, and rattle, and bang of the screw and engine ; the pitching and rolling of the ship, with the sensation of standing upright for a moment, and then of being made to rest comfortably upon the top of your head ; the sense of undergoing internal somersaults, to say nothing of describing every known curve externally. You study physiology involuntarily, and doubt if your heart, your lungs, or indeed any of your internal organs, are firmly attached, after all ; if you shall not lose them at the next lurch of the ship. Your head is burning with fever, your hands and feet like ice, and you feel dimly, but wretchedly, that this is but the beginning of sorrows ; that there are a dozen more days to come. You are conscious of a vague wonder (as the night lengthens out interminably) what eternity *can* be, since time is so long. The bells strike the half hours, tormenting you with calculations which amount to nothing. Everything within the room, as well as without, swings, and rolls, and rattles. You are confident your bottles in the rack will go next, and don’t much care if they do, though you lie and dread the crash. You are tormented with thirst, and the ice-water is in that same rack, just beyond your reach. The candle in its silver case, hinged against the wall, swings back and forth with dizzy motion, throwing moving distorted shadows over everything, and making the night like a sickly day. You long for darkness, and, when at last the light grows dim, until only a red spark remains and the smoke that adds its mite to your misery, long for its return. At regular intervals you hear the tramp, tramp, over-head, of the relieving watch ; and, in the midst of fitful slumbers, the hoarse voices of the sailors, as the wind freshens and they hoist the sails, wake you from frightful dreams. At the first gray dawn of light come the swash of water and the trickling down of the stream against your window, with the sound of the holy-stones pushed back and forth upon the deck. And with the light—O, blessed light !—came to us a dawn of better things.

There followed days when we lay contented upon the narrow sofa, or within the contracted berths, but when to lift our heads was woe. A kind of negative blessedness — absence from misery. We felt as if we had lost our heart, our conscience, and almost our immortal soul, to quote Mark Twain. There remained to us only those principles and prejudices most firmly rooted and grounded. Even our personal vanity left us at last, and nothing could be more forsaken and appropriate than the plain green gown with its one row of military buttons, attired in which, day after day, I idly watched the faces that passed our door. “ That’s like you Americans,” said our handsome young Irish doctor, pointing to these same buttons. “ You can’t leave your country without taking the spread-eagle with you !”

Our officers, with this one exception, were English. Our captain, a living representative of the traditional English sailor. Not young, save in heart ; simple, unaffected, and frank in manner, but with a natural dignity that prevented undue familiarity, he sang about the ship from morning till night, with a voice that could carry no air correctly, but with an enjoyment delightful to witness — always a song suggested by existing circumstances, but with

“ Cheer, boys, cheer ; my mother’s sold her mangle,”

when everything else failed. He was forward among the men on the deck with an eye to the wind, down below bringing fruit and comfort to the sick in the steerage, dealing out apples and oranges to the children, with an encouraging word and the first line of a song for everybody.

The life of the ship was an Englishman, with the fresh complexion almost invariably seen upon Englishmen, and forty years upon a head that looked twenty-five. He was going home after a short tour through the United States, with his mind as frill of prejudices as his memorandum-book was of notes. He chanced, oddly enough, to room with the genuine Yankee of the company — a long, lean, good-natured individual from one of the eastern states, “ close on ter Varmont,” who had a way of rolling his eyes fearfully, especially when he glared at his food. He represented a mowing machine company, and we called him “ the Mowing Machine Man.” He accosted us one day, sidling up to our door, with, “ How d’ye do to-day ?”

“ Better, thank you,” I replied from the sofa.

“ That’s real nice. Tell ye what, we’ll be glad to see the ladies out. How’s yer mar ?” nodding towards the berth from which twinkled Mrs. K.’s eyes. I laughed, and explained that our relations were of affection rather than consanguinity. His interest increased when he found we were travelling alone. He gave us his London address, evidently considering us in the light of Daniels about to enter the lions’ den. “ Ef ye have any trouble,” said he, as he wrote down the street and number, “ there’s one Yankee’ll stand up for ye.” He amused the Englishman by calling out, “ Hullo. D’ye feel *good* this morning ?” “ No,” would be the reply, with a burst of laughter ; “ I feel awful wicked ; think I’ll go right out and kill somebody.”

There was a shout one morning, “ A sail ! See the stars and stripes !” I had not raised my head for days, but staggered across the floor at that, and clinging to the frame, thrust my head out of the window. Yes, there was a ship close by, with the stars and stripes floating from the mast-head, I found, when the roll of the steamer carried my window to its level. “ Seems good ter see the old rag !” I looked up to find the Mowing Machine Man gazing upon it with eyes all afloat. “ I’d been a thinking,” said he, “ all them fellers have got somebody waiting for ’em over there,”—our passengers were mostly English,—“ but there wasn’t nobody a waiting for me. Tell ye what,”—and he shook out the folds of a red and yellow handkerchief, —“ it does my heart good ter see the old flag.” There was a bond of sympathy between us from that moment.

We had another and less agreeable specimen of this free people—a tall, tough western cattle dealer, who quarrelled if he could find an antagonist, swore occasionally, drank liquor, and chewed tobacco perpetually, wore his trousers tucked into his long boots, his hands tucked into his pockets, and, to crown these attributes, believed in Andrew Johnson !—a middle-aged man, with soft, curling brown hair above a face that could be cruelly cold and hard. His hair should have been wire ; his blue eyes were steel. But hard as was his face, it softened and smoothed itself a little at sight of the sick women. He paused beside us one day with a rough attempt to interest and amuse by displaying a knife case containing a dozen different articles. “ This is ter take a stun out of a boss’s huf, and this, d’ye see, is a tooth - pick ;” putting it to immediate use by way of explanation. At the table he talked long and loud upon the rinderpest, and other kindred and appetizing topics. “ I’ve been a butcher myself,” he would say. “ I’ve cut up hundreds o’ critters. What part of an ox, now, d’ye think that was taken from ?” pointing to the joint before him, and addressing a refined, delicate-faced old gentleman across the table, who only stared in silent horror.

But even the “Cattle Man” was less marked in his peculiarities than the “Jersey Man,” a melancholy-eyed, curly-wigged individual from the Jersey shore, who wore his slouched hat upon one side of his head, and looked as though he were doing the rakish lover in some fifth-rate theatre ; who was “in the musical line myself ; Smith and Jones’s organs, you know ; that’s me ;” and who, being neither Smith nor Jones, we naturally concluded must be the organ. He recited poetry in a loud tone at daybreak, and discussed politics for hours together, arguing in the most satisfactory manner with the principles, and standing most willingly upon the platform, of everybody. He assumed a patronizing air towards the Mowing Machine Man.

“Well, you *are* a green Yankee,” he would say ; “lucky for you that you fell in with me ;” to which the latter only chuckled, “That’s so.” He had much to tell of himself, of his grandmother, and of his friends generally, who came to see him off ; “felt awfully, too,” which we could hardly credit ; rolled out snatches of sentimental songs, iterating and reiterating that his bark was on the sea,—and a most disagreeable one we found it ; wished we had a piano on board, to which we murmured, “The Lord forbid ;” and hoped we should soon be well enough to join him in the “White Squall.” He was constantly reminding us that we were a very happy family party, so “congenial,” and evidently agreed with the Mowing Machine Man, who said, “They’re the best set of fellows I ever see. They’ll tell ye anything.”

We numbered a clergyman among us, of course. “Always a head wind when there’s a parson aboard,” say the sailors. So this poor dyspeptic little man bore the blame of our constant adverse winds. Nothing more bigoted, more fanatical than his religious belief could be imagined. You read the terrors of the Lord in his eye ; and yet he won respect, and something more, by his consistency and zeal. Earnestness will tell. “The parson will have great influence over the Cattle Man,” the captain said, Sabbath morning, as we were walking the deck. “The Cattle Man ?” “Yes, the parson will get a good hold of him.” Just then, as if to prove the old proverb true, that his Satanic majesty is always in the immediate neighborhood when his character is under discussion, the Cattle Man and Jersey came up the companion-way. “If you please, captain,” said the former, “we are a committee to ask if the parson may preach to the steerage people to-night.” “Certainly,” was the reply ; “I will attend myself.” They thanked him, and went below, leaving me utterly amazed. They were the last men upon the ship whom one would have selected as a committee upon spiritual things !

The church service for the cabin passengers was held in the saloon. A velvet cushion upon one end of the long table constituted the pulpit, before which the minister stood, holding fast to the rack on either side, and bracing himself against the captain’s chair in the rear. Even then he made, involuntarily, more bows than any ritualist, and the scripture, “What went ye out for to see ? A reed shaken by the wind ?” would present itself. The sailors in their neat dress filed in and ranged themselves in one corner. The stewards gathered about the door, one, with face like an owl, most conspicuous. The passengers filled their usual seats, and a delegation from the steerage crept shyly into the unoccupied space — women with shawls over their heads and babies in their arms, shock-headed men and toddling children, but all with an evident attempt at appropriate dress and manner. Among them was one sweet young English face beneath an old crape bonnet. A pair of shapely hands, which the shabby black gloves could not disguise, held fast a little child. Widowhood and want in the old world ; what was waiting her in the new ? The captain read the service, and all the people responded. The women’s eyes grew wet at the sound of the familiar words. The little English widow bent her face over the head of the child in her lap, and something glistened in its hair. Our sympathies grew wide, and we joined in the prayer for the queen, that she might have victory over her enemies, and even murmured a response to the petition for Albert Edward and the nobility, dimly conscious that they needed prayers. The good captain added a petition for the president of the United States, to which the Mowing Machine Man and I said, “Amen.” Then the minister, having poised himself carefully, read a discourse, sulphurous but sincere ; the Mowing Machine Man thrusting his elbow into my side in a most startling manner at every particularly blue point. We were evidently in sympathy ; but I could have dispensed with the

expression of it. We closed with the doxology, standing upon our feet and swaying back and forth as though it had been a Shaker chant, led by an improvised choir and the Jersey Man.

At night we descended into the depths of the steamer to worship with the steerage passengers. It was like one of Rembrandt's pictures—the darkness, the wild, strangely-attired people, the weird light from the lanterns piercing the gloom, and bringing out group after group with fearful distinctness ; the pale, earnest face of the preacher, made almost unearthly by the glare of the yellow light—a face with its thin-drawn lips, its eyes like coals of fire such as the flames of martyrdom lit once, I imagine. Close beside him stood the Cattle Man, towering like Saul above the people, and with an air that plainly said, “ Beware — I stand by the parson.”

“ There is a land of pure delight,”

repeated the minister ; and in a moment the words rolled out of the Cattle Man's mouth while he beckoned with his long arm for the people to rise. Throwing back his head, he sang with an unction indescribable, verse after verse, caught doubtless at some western camp-meeting, where he had tormented the saints. One after another took up the strain. Clear and strong came the tones from every dark corner, until, like one mighty voice, while the steamer rolled and the waves dashed against its sides, rose the words

“ Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Shall fright us from that shore.”

A great stillness fell upon the people as the minister gave out his text, and began his discourse. He had lacked freedom in the saloon, but here he forgot everything save the words given him ; hard words they seemed to me, containing little of the love of God. I glanced at the Mowing Machine Man, who had made a seat of half a barrel under the stairs. He winked in a fearful manner, as though he would say, “ Just see how he's a goin' on !” But the people received it gladly. One after another of the sailors crept down the stairs and stood in the shadow. I watched them curiously. It may be that this stern, hard doctrine suited these stern, hard men. It made me shudder.

But the record of all these days would have no end. How can I tell of the long, happy hours, when more than strength, when perfect exhilaration, came to us ; when existence alone was a delight ? To sit upon the low wheel-house, with wraps and ribbons and hair flying in the wind, while we sang, —

“ O, a life on the ocean wave !”

to admiring fishes ; to watch the long, lazy swell of the sea, or the spray breaking from the tops of the white caps into tiny rainbows ; to walk the rolling deck for hours with never a shadow of weariness ; to cling to the flag-staff when the stern of the ship rose in the air then dropped like a heavy stone into the sea, sending the spray far over and above us ; to count the stars at night, watching the other gleaming phosphorescent stars that seemed to have fallen from heaven upon the long wake of the steamer, — all this was a delight unspeakable.

One morning, when the land seemed a forgotten dream, we awoke to find green Erin close beside us. All the day before the sea-gulls had been hovering over us — beautiful creatures, gray above and white beneath, clouds with a silver lining. Tiny land birds, too, flew about us, resting wearily upon the rigging. The sea all at once became like glass. It seemed like the book of Revelation when the sun shone on it, — the sea of glass mingled with fire. For a time the land was but a line of rock, with martello towers perched upon the points. On the right, Fastnet Rock rose out of the sea, crowned with a light-house ; then the gray barren shore of Cape Clear Island, and soon the sharp- pointed Stag Rocks. It is a treacherous coast. “ I've been here many a night,” said the captain, as he gave us his glass, “ when I never expected to

see morning." And all the while he was speaking, the sea smiled and smiled, as though it could never be cruel.

We drew nearer and nearer, until we could see the green fields bounded by stone walls, the white, winding roads, and little villages nestling among the hills. Towards noon the lovely harbor of Queenstown opened before us, surrounded and almost shut in by rocky islands. Through the glass we could see the city, with its feet in the bay. We were no longer alone. The horizon was dotted with sails. Sometimes a steamer crossed our wake, or a ship bore down upon us. We hoisted our signals. We dipped our flag. The sailors were busy painting the boats, and polishing the brass till it shone again. Now the tender steams out from Queenstown. The steerage passengers in unwonted finery, tall hats and unearthly bonnets, and one in a black silk gown, are running about forward, shaking hands, gathering up boxes and bundles, and pressing towards the side which the tender has reached. There are the shouting of orders, the throwing of a rope, and in a moment they are crowding the plank. One long cheer, echoed from the stern of our steamer, and they are off.

All day we walked the deck ; even the sick crawled up at last to see the panorama. We still lingered when night fell, and we had turned away from the land to strike across the channel, and the picture rests with me now ; the purple sky with one long stretch of purple, hazy cloud, behind which the sun went down ; the long, low line of purple rock, our last glimpse of Ireland, and the shining, purple sea, with not a ripple upon its surface.

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First Days in England.

Up the harbor of Liverpool.—We all emerge as butterflies.—The Mersey tender.—Lot's wife.—“ Any tobacco ? ” — “ Names, please. ” — St. George's Hall. — The fashionable promenade. — The coffee-room. —

WE steamed up the harbor of Liverpool the next morning. New Brighton, with its green terraces, its Chinese-pagoda villas, spread out upon one side, upon the other that solid wall of docks, the barricade that breaks the constant charges of the sea, with the masts of ships from every land for an abattis. The wraps and shapeless garments worn so long were laid aside ; the pretty hood which had, like charity, covered so many sins of omission, hidden, itself, at last, the soft wool stiffened with the sea spray, the bright colors dimmed by smoke, and soot, and burning sun. We crept shyly upon the deck in our unaccustomed finery, as though called at a moment's notice to play another woman's part, half-learned. Not in us alone was the transformation. The girl in blue had blossomed into a a bell — a blue bell. The Cattle Man, his hands released at last from the thralldom of his pockets, stalked about, funereal, in wrinkled black. A solferino neck-tie and tall hat of a pre-Adaraite formation transmogrified our Mowing Machine friend. Nondescripts, that had lain about the deck wrapped in cocoons of rugs and shawls, emerged suddenly — butterflies! A painful courtesy seized us all. We had doffed the old familiar intercourse with our sea-garments. We gathered in knots, or stood apart singly, mindful at last of our dignity.

The Mersey tender (a tender mercy to some) puffed out to meet us, and we descended the plank as those who turn away from home, leaving much of our thoughts, and something of our hearts, within the ship. It had been such a place of rest, of blessed idleness ! Only when our feet touched the wharf did we take up the burden of life again. There were the meeting of friends, in which we had no part; the mael-strom of horses, and carts, and struggling humanity, in which we found a most unwilling place ; and then we followed fast in the footsteps of the Mowing Machine Man, who in his turn followed a hair-covered trunk upon the shoulders of a stout porter, our destination the custom-house shed close by. For a moment, as we were tossed hither and thither by the swaying mass, our desires followed our thoughts to a certain

sheltered nook, upon a still, white deck, with the sunbeams slanting down through the furled sails above, with the lazy, lapping sea below, and only our own idle thoughts for company. Then we remembered Lot's wife.

There was a Kittle meek-faced custom-house officer ill waiting, with a voice so out of proportion to his size, that he seemed to have hired it for the occasion, or come into it with his uniform by virtue of his office. "Any tobacco?" he asked, severely, as we lifted the lid of our one trunk. We gave a virtuous and indignant negative. That was all. We might go our several ways now unmolested. One fervent expression of good wishes among our little company, while we make for a moment a network of clasped hands, and then we pass out of the great gates into our new world, and into the clutches of the waiting cabmen. By what stroke of good fortune we and our belongings were consigned to one and the same cab, in the confusion and terror of the moment, we did not know at the time. It was clearly through the intervention of a kind fellow-passenger, who, seeing that amazement enveloped us like a garment, kindly took us in charge. The dazed, as well as the lame and lazy, are cared for, it seems. By what stroke of good fortune we ever reached our destination, we knew still less. Our cab was a triumph of impossibilities, uncertainties, and discomfort. Our attenuated beast, like an animated hoop skirt, whose bones were only prevented, by the encasing skin, from flying off as we turned the corners, experienced hardly less difficulty in drawing his breath than in drawing his load. We descended at the entrance to the hotel as those who have escaped from imminent peril. We mounted the steps — two lone, but by no means lorn, damsels, two anxious, but by no means aimless females, knowing little of the world, less of travelling, and nothing whatever of foreign ways. Our very air, as we entered the door, was an apology for the intrusion.

"Names, please," said the smiling man in waiting, opening what appeared to be the book of fate. We added ours to the long list of pilgrims and strangers who had sojourned here, dotting our i's and crossing our t's in the most elegant manner imaginable. If any one has a doubt as to our early advantages, let him examine the record of the Washington Hotel, Liverpool. The heading, "Remarks," upon the page, puzzled us. Were they to be of a sacred or profane nature? Of an autobiographical character? Were they to refer to the dear land we had just left? Through some political throes she had just brought forth a ruler. Should we add to the T. J. S. against our names, "As well as could be expected?" We hesitated,—and wrote nothing. Up the wide stairs, past the transparency of Washington—in the bluest of blue coats, the yellowest of top boots, and an air of making the best of an unsought and rather ridiculous position—we followed the doily upon the head of the pretty chambermaid to our wide, comfortable room, with its formidable, high-curtained beds. The satchels and parcels innumerable were propped carefully into .rectitude upon the dressing table, under the impression that the ship would give a lurch; and then, gazing out through the great plate glass windows upon the busy square below, we endeavored to compose our perturbed minds and gather our scattered wits.

It is not beautiful, this great city of Liverpool, creeping up from the sea. It has little to interest a stranger aside from its magnificent docks and warehouses. There are mammoth truck horses from Suffolk, with feet like cart wheels; there is St. George's Hall, the pride of the people, standing in the busy square of the same name, with a statue of the saint himself — a terror to all dragons — just before it. It is gray, many columned, wide stepped, vast in its proportions. Do you care for its measurement? Having seen that, you are ready to depart; and, indeed, there is nothing to detain one here beyond a day of rest, a moment to regain composure after the tossing of the sea. There are some substantial dwellings, — for commerce has its kings, — and some fine shops, — for commerce also has its queens, — and one fine drive, of which we learned too late. The air of endurance, which pervades the whole city, as it does all cities in the old world, impresses one greatly, as though they were built for eternity, not time; the founders having forgotten that here we are to have no continuing city. In the new world, man tears down and builds up. Every generation moulds and fashions its

towns and cities after its own desires, or to suit its own means. Man is master. In the old world, one generation after another surges in and out of these grim, gray walls, leaving not so much as the mark the waves leave upon the rocks. Unchanged, unchanging, they stand age after age, time only softening the hard outlines, deepening the shadows it has cast upon them, and so bringing them into a likeness of each other that they seem to have been the design of one mind, the work of one pair of hands, and hardly of mortal mind or hands at that. They seem to say to man, "We have stood here ages before you were born. We shall stand here ages after you are forgotten."

They must be filled with echoes, with ghosts, and haunting memories. Bold Street, a tolerably narrow and winding way, in which many are found to walk, — contrary to all precedent, — boasts the finest shops. Here the Lancashire witches, as the beauties of the county are called, walk, and talk, and buy gewgaws of an afternoon. It was something strange to us to see long silken skirts entirely destitute of crinoline, ruffle, or flounce, trailed here through mud and mire, or raised displaying low Congress gaiters, destitute of heels. For ourselves, if we had been the king of the Cannibal Islands, we could hardly have attracted more attention than we did in our plain, short travelling suits and high-heeled boots. It grew embarrassing, especially when our expression of unqualified benevolence drew after us a train of beggars. They crossed the street to meet us. They emerged from every side street and alley, thrusting dirty hands into our faces, and repeating wice-told tales in our ears, until we were thankful when oblivion and the shadow of the hotel fell upon us.

We dined in the coffee-room, — that comfortable and often delightfully cosy apartment fitted with little tables, and with its corner devoted to books, to papers and conversation, — that combination of dining, tea and reading-room unknown to an American hotel, — sacred to the sterner sex from all time, and only opened to us within a few years, — the gates being forced then, I imagine, by American women, who will not consent to hide their light under a bushel, or keep to some far away corner, unseeing and unseen. English women, as a rule, take their meals in their own private parlors. Perhaps because English men generally desire the flowers intrusted to their fostering care to blush unseen. It may be better for the gardeners ; it may be better for the flowers — I cannot tell ; but we dined in the coffee- room, as Americans usually do. One of the clergymen, who attend at such places, received our order. It was not so very formidable an affair, after all, this going down by ourselves ; or would not have been, if the big-eyed waiter, who watched our every movement, would have left us, and the military man at the next table, who showed "the purple tide of war," or something else, in his face, and blew his nose like a trombone, ceased to stare. As it was, we aired our most elegant table manners. We turned in our elbows and turned out our toes, — so to speak, — and ate our mutton with a grace that destroyed all appetite. We tried to appear as though we had frequently dined in the presence of a whole battalion of soldiery, under the scrutiny of innumerable waiters, — and failed, I am sure. "With verdure clad" was written upon every line of our faces. The occasion of this cross fire we do not know to this day. Was it unbounded admiration ? Was it spoons ?

Having brushed off* the spray of the sea, having balanced ourselves upon the solid earth, having seen St. George's Hall, there was nothing to detain us longer, and the next morning we were on our way to London. We had scrutinized our bill, — which might have been reckoned in pounds, ounces, and penny- weights, for aught we knew to the contrary, — and informed the big-eyed waiter that it was correct. We had also offered him imploringly our largest piece of silver, which he condescended to accept ; and having been presented with a ticket and a handful of silver and copper by the porter who accompanied us to the station across the way, in return for two or three gold pieces, we shook off the dust of Liverpool from our feet, turned our eyes from the splendors of St. George's Hall, and set our faces steadfastly towards our destination.

A few practical words suggest themselves here which would pass unnoticed in a preface — where, perhaps, they belong. First, in regard to the question often asked, “ Can women travel alone through Europe ?” Recalling our own experience, — too brief to serve as a criterion, — I should still say, “ Yes.” We met, frequently, parties of ladies who had made the whole grand tour alone. In Switzerland we found English women, constantly, without escort. The care of choosing routes, of looking after baggage and buying tickets, of managing the sometimes complicated affairs attendant upon sight-seeing, with the vexations and impositions met with and suffered on every hand, no woman would voluntarily accept without great compensation, I am sure. But if she prefers- even these cares to seeing nothing of the world, they can be borne, and the annoyances, to a great extent overcome, through patience and growing experience.

Then, if you start alone, or without being consigned to friends upon the other side, — which no young woman would think of doing, — you are almost sure to join, at different times, other parties, whose way is your own ; and far preferable this is to making up a large company before leaving home — the members of which usually disagree before reaching the continent, and often part in mutual disgust. “ There is nothing like travelling to bring out a person's real nature,” say some. But this is untrue. Travelling develops, rather than reveals, I think, and under conditions favorable only to the worse side of one's nature. You are bewildered by the multitude of strange sights and ways ; the very foundation of usages is broken up ; you are putting forth physical exertions that would seem superhuman at home, and are mentally racked until utterly exhausted, — for there is nothing so exhausting as continued sight-seeing, — and at this point people say they begin “ to find each other out.”

An occasional period of rest — not staying within doors to study up the guide-books, but entire cessation from seeing, hearing, or doing — and a scrap from the mantle of charity, will save many a threatened friendship at these times. We learned to know our strength — how weak it was ; and to await in some delightful spot, chosen for the purpose, returning energy, courage, and interest ; for even that would be banished at times by utter weariness and exhaustion.

In former times, Americans fitted themselves out for Europe as though bound to a desert island. Wider intelligence and experience have opened their eyes and reformed their judgment ; still, a word upon this subject will not be unwelcome, I am sure, to girls especially, who contemplate a trip over the ocean.

In the first place, your steamer outfit is a distinct affair. You are allowed to take any baggage you wish for into your state-room ; but, if wise, you will not fill the narrow space, nor encumber yourself with anything larger than a lady's hat box^ which may offer a tolerable seat to the stewardess, or visitors of condolence, in case seasickness confines you to berth or sofa.

Even preferable to this is a flat, English portmanteau, which can be slipped under the lower berth. If you sail for Liverpool, you can leave this at your hotel there in charge of the head waiter until you return, and thus avoid the expense and care of useless baggage.

Its contents your own good sense will in a measure suggest. Let me add — a double gown or woollen wrapper, in which you may sleep, flannels (even though you cross the ocean in summer), merino stockings, warm gloves or mittens, as pretty a hood as you please, only be sure that it covers the back of your head, since you will ignore all cunning craft of hair dressing, for a few days at least, and even after you are well enough to appear at the table, perhaps. Bear in mind that the Northern Atlantic is a cold place, and horribly open to the wind at all seasons of the year ; that you will live on the deck when not in your berth or at your meals, and that the deck of an ocean steamer partakes of the nature of a whirlwind. Fur is by no

means out of place, and skirts should be sufficiently heavy to defy the gales, which convert everything into a sail. Take as many wraps as you choose — and then you will wish you had one more. A large shawl, or, better, a carriage-robe, is indispensable, as you will very likely lie rolled up like a cocoon much of the time. A low sea-chair, or common camp-chair, is useful to older people ; but almost any girl will prefer a seat upon the deck itself; there are comfortable crannies into which no chair can be wedged.

By all means avoid elaborate fastenings to garments. A multiplicity of unmanageable “ hooks and eyes” is untold torment at sea ; and let these garments be few, but warm. You will appreciate the wisdom of this suggestion, when you have accomplished the herculean task of making your first state-room toilet.

If you are really going abroad for a season of travel, take almost nothing. You can never know what you will need until the necessity arises. If you anticipate, you misjudge. Your American outfit will render you an oddity in England. But do not change there, or you will be still more singular in Paris. It is as well to start with but one dress besides the one you wear on the steamer — anything you chance to have ; a black alpaca, or half-worn black silk, is very serviceable. When you reach Paris, circumstances and the season will govern your purchases ; and this same dress will be almost a necessity for constant railway journeys, rainy-day sight-seeing, and mule-riding in Switzerland. A little care and brushing, fresh linen, and a pretty French tie, will make it presentable — if not more — at any hotel dinner table.

A warm shawl or wrap of some kind you will need for evenings, — even though you travel in summer, — for visiting the cathedrals, which are chill as a tomb ; and for weeks together among the mountains you will never throw it aside. But if you can take but one, don't provide yourself with a water-proof. They are too undeniably ugly, and not sufficiently warm for constant wear. If it rains slightly, the umbrella, which you will buy from force of necessity and example in England, will protect you ; if in torrents, you will ride. Indeed, you will always ride, time is so precious, cab-hire so cheap, and distances so great in most foreign cities.

Lastly, let me beg of you to provide yourself with an abundant supply of patience and good-nature. Without these, no outfit is complete. Try to laugh at annoyances. Smile, at least. And do not anticipate difficulties. Above all, enjoy yourself, and then everybody you meet will enjoy you. And so good by, and “ God bless us every one.”

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