

Voyages across The Atlantic

The Irish-Canuck-Yankee

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1913

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VOYAGE 1

Wednesday morning, June 17, 1885, was a memorable time in my youthful career. On that date I arrived at Queenstown, Ireland. Putting up at a modest lodging house for the night, unaccompanied by any friend or old acquaintance, but one of many others departing upon the same mission—that of fortune-hunting in America—I felt rather lonely.

Early in the morning of Thursday we boarded a tender, which conveyed a rather sobbing lot out to sea, where we boarded the Anchor liner, *City of Rome*, a first-class steamer in her day. Steerage passengers predominated, although there were many first cabin and inter-mediate passengers also aboard. In a couple of days our seasickness passed away, and the boys being of the mirth-provoking kind began to amuse themselves. A couple of cattle drovers impersonated Messrs. Moody and Sankey (two evangelists who were enjoying great distinction both at home and abroad at this time), and held mock meetings in the steerage dining saloon nightly. What purported to be choruses and refrains of Sankey selections were loudly sung, comic songs, and addresses on a variety of subjects, also formed a part of each evening's programme.

Sunday came and in the afternoon a deck preacher made his appearance. When he and a few followers tried to sing gospel songs, the Irish rowdy element aboard drowned them out by singing such songs as "Jenny, my own true loved one." The volunteer man of cloth was compelled to desist, much to the annoyance of his Protestant friends and followers. I am sorry to say that it is such intolerant performances in the past by the unthinking Irish that has produced prejudice against their church. But a more tolerant age is with us, and it is now nothing unusual to see street preachers conducting services, unmolested, openly and publicly upon the business thoroughfares in Roman Catholic Ireland, yes and Catholic priests lecturing from Protestant pulpits.

We were not allowed to finish the voyage, however, without more stirring excitement and graver trouble. One afternoon in mid-Atlantic a stormy scene took place between about 150 firemen, begrimed with coal and smoke from the furnace rooms. With them they brought large baskets full of promiscuous provisions, which they rudely deposited upon the deck, with a strong protest to the effect that if they didn't get something better to eat the "bloody ship" could stay there. The officers in charge quickly remedied their grievances, and they went back to their coal-shovelling duties satisfied.

Reaching New York City, New York State, we landed in Castle Garden, where so many of those gone before also took refuge.

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VOYAGE 2

In the early part of February, 1889, I happened to pass through Montreal, Canada, on my way to Portland, Maine, from which winter port I was going to sail to Londonderry via Halifax. Montreal was in gala attire, the carnival season being on, with an ice palace and the governor-general the principal attractions. This was my first introduction to a palace built solely of ice blocks. Nor did I ever hanker for similar sights since. Instead of intensifying the snow and ice crops of Canada, undertakings that would ameliorate the ice cold temperature of the Dominion would appeal more strongly

to me. Raising large blocks of ice one above another, and cementing them with frozen water, and leveling them down again after their crowd-drawing usefulness ceased, presented no particular attraction to me.

However, I sailed from the open port of an adjoining state, reaching Halifax next day, steaming out of this, one of the most capacious and noted harbors in the world, the next day.

This voyage was exceedingly dull and uninteresting. Nothing whatever worth mentioning transpired aboard on the passage over, save the usual festive seasick suffering.

Through an oversight, the steamship ticket agent routed me wrong. He booked me for Queens-town, while the ship went north via Moville to Liverpool. Noticing the error, I took the matter up with the purser, who informed me that I would be carried on to Liverpool, and returned to the southern Irish port by the next steamer. As I did not approve of this round-about way of reaching home, I got off with the rest of the Irish passengers. The ship was the Circassian, and the company were the Allan Line people, so on reaching their Londonderry offices, and explaining my dilemma, the company's representatives there courteously tendered me a railway ticket to Dublin and three shillings in cash. So pleased was I with this generous treatment, that I have never forgotten it, and made it a point thereafter to cross the Atlantic, whenever practicable, in their ships. Save one voyage, westbound, I have religiously kept this promise.

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VOYAGE 3

One day in the forepart of March, 1889, I again sailed from the south of Ireland, boarding the City of Chicago (Inman Liner), once more bound for New York. Quite a large cabin passenger list ensured a lively time. Sea-sickness again played havoc with us. For long days and nights I suffered untold agonies from it. Helplessly I laid in my berth, unable to put anything down, but heaving everything up.

Along towards the finish, thrilling episodes daily transpired. But the night before landing capped the climax. The bar and smoking saloon habitues became hilarious, positively refusing to clear the deck and go to their bunks. In a hoof-sounding way they patrolled the deck until far into the early morning. It was a night's carouse. Storytelling, songs, short speeches, interspersed with the "cup that cheers," garnished the festivities. Seamen sleeping in apartments adjacent could snatch but little refreshing slumber. Thus the annoying, oiled and lubricated by fiery liquors, noise and confusion lasted until daylight,

Sunday forenoon we docked and landed. That day I spent in Brooklyn, where I availed myself of the opportunity of attending services in the evening at the Brooklyn Tabernacle, the Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, one of America's foremost divinity doctors, being the preacher.

Well do I remember when in the course of his sermon he portrayed the difference between a real thief and a sneak thief, he invited all of those in the church, who were sneak thieves to "stand up," the same invitation being extended to the other kind. Carefully surveying the immense concourse of people present, and noticing none upon their feet, he expressed great satisfaction that no such people attended the Tabernacle.

Since that time I have heard this eminent divine preach and lecture frequently in various places and upon different occasions. Fully repaid was I indeed for the effort made to hear this eloquent man on this my second entry into America through its greatest gateway.

For the next fifteen years I kept landward. At the expiration of that time business arrangements permitted me to look Atlanticward again. So I once more sailed from New York on the Allan-State steamship Laurentian, about the middle of October, 1903. The ship sailed for Glasgow, and my destination was Dublin.

This rather small vessel was slow, and our cabin party was also small. There were only thirteen of us. "With such a meager passenger list, gathered from the four corners of the world, with lots of time to whittle away both funny and unmirthful situations arose. Men would gather in the smoke-room and swap barnyard and other stories. Others again would tempt fate by repairing in couples, with their deck chairs and steamer rugs, to quiet nooks on deck, weather permitting, or elsewhere when sea air was unpropitious. As for myself I enjoyed the enlivening society of a bonnie Scotch lassie, and in her pleasant company shortened the long voyage admirably.

A little Australian gentleman passenger aboard treated the ladies of his liking to snakebelt souvenirs, all the way from the antipodes, and some of these, ere the voyage was finished, created a lot of talk, in addition to some other unpleasant and unchivalrous doings.

In due time we were landed in Greenock, Scotland. From that town I took a coastwise steamboat to Dublin. How interesting the town seemed to me after a fifteen-year stayaway can illy be appreciated by those never having gone through similar experiences, where their native land was concerned.

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VOYAGE 5

Along in the forepart of April, 1904, I boarded a small steamer in Dublin, ticketed to Glasgow, Scotland.

The distance being something more than a night's steaming, our boat reached the Clyde seaport early the next forenoon. Immediately thereafter I took a cab and drove to the ocean-going steamship Mongolian, Allan liner, scheduled to sail that evening for Moville, Halifax (Canada), and New York.

While viraiting for the time to come when our vessel would push out, quite a scene was witnessed, and one the like of which I had never seen before, that is on British home soil. Up to that time I had considered such impromptu gatherings strictly American. But the more we travel the more we see and learn. This ovation partook of the nature of dock gospel meetings. Singing, praying and preaching were carried on in a most soul-stirring manner for over an hour before the ship shoved out from the wharf.

On this voyage a good time was in store for me. Six ladies and myself comprised the first-cabin list. Between second and third class there were over six hundred souls aboard. Taking the North Atlantic route—Moville to Halifax—icebergs, of a large and ship-destroying kind, occasionally interested the ladies.

Crossing the ocean on one of those slow-moving vessels, passengers are much more banged about than on the swift sailers. Accordingly their anatomy becomes more disturbed, and their stomachs more riled, all of which lends its quota to prolonging the usual siege of seasickness. On the slow ship big waves play more. Ere they push forward a savage-like whitecap, mountain high, will hit them full swing amidships, rolling the craft thus hit out of its way, shipping water on deck into the bargain.

Speedy steamships act differently. No one wave can get in a full whack at them. Steaming so fast, they have gone by. Waves can only touch them here and there, powerlessly spending themselves touching only a small portion of the fore and aft parts of the leviathan.

Aboard the Mongolian Captain Pickering treated us most courteously. We were guests at his own table, and he spared no pains in giving us nautical information. All the ladies were enthusiastic in their praise of the gallant captain. He even invited us on his bridge, and briefly explained the various uses of his navigation instruments.

All the other officers, engineers and stewards, were equally civil and agreeable. In no service, on land or sea, do we find a finer body of men than those manning trans-Atlantic steamships. It is indeed wonderful to see the cleanliness and punctuality discernible everywhere.

On this voyage the dressing bell rang at 8 o'clock a.m. Breakfast bell at 8:30. By 11 in the forenoon our bouillon, or beeftea, was served on deck, or wherever else we desired. Luncheon at 1 p.m. Afternoon tea about 4 o'clock, served on saloon tables, or wherever else ordered. At 5:30 the bell announced the dressing-for-dinner hour. At 6 o'clock dinner was served, the day's eating programme finishing up with supper at 9 in the evening.

My lady traveling companions being of the accomplished kind, the music saloon, its piano, and other accompanying musical instruments, were in constant use. Music and singing, therefore, passed off many pleasant hours.

Life aboard ship is either one thing or the other. It is a season of music, merriment and pleasantries, or a time of nauseating suffering. Usually all hands appear at the first meal served. Afterwards they begin to drop out one by one, the most squeamish going first. Later on in the trip they begin to stalk back to their allotted dining-saloon seats. Some are subdued, and talk loud about never crossing the ocean again. Others again are glad to be well and around, asserting that they will never be sick on sea in the future. But a feeling of empty languidness is visibly shown by all, which takes its final departure long before a slow ship reaches port.

In the case of fast ships convalescence is different. From them passengers, half convalescent, are apt to be put ashore. In such cases it resembles discharging patients half-cured from hospitals. For this very reason I have always taken pains to select comparatively slow ships when crossing. Thus I am provided with ample time to become very sick, and also to become perfectly healed up again ere I strike land.

It may be information for many landmen to know that nearly all ship hands are engaged at the port of origin for the round-trip voyage. If satisfaction is given, and good records are made, they are re-engaged again and again. However, in any event, they are, on reaching the home port, paid off and discharged, with the admonition that they may come round again before the ship sails. Of course officers, pursers, ship surgeons and head stewards are exempted, being permanently employed. But they go ashore to their respective homes, as the culinary department of their ship is closed down when in harbor at home.

The Mongolian in due time reached Halifax. Here she discharged much cargo, and nearly all the second-class and steerage passengers. Having gained some notoriety on the way thither, regarding the fact that I was the only first-cabin male passenger, the boys just disembarked, foregathered on the rickety old wharf, and gave me several cheers as I stood on deck while the ship backed out of the harbor for New York. This was an ovation wholly unlooked-for by me. It satisfied the cheery Scotch lads, and did me no harm.

On the two-day sail to my destination, Captain Pickering and myself grew quite chummy. Approaching New York, while on the bridge with him, he asked me if I had my watch set correctly. All travelers know that westbound timepieces must be daily adjusted in order to keep time, as we are steadily gaining time.

Thus a ship making the run from New York to Liverpool in four days necessitates the pushing on of the hands of a clock or watch one hour daily. An eight-day ship demands a putting on of hands only a half-hour daily. Westbound passengers ascertain the correct seatime by acting vice versa. Taking his marine glasses in his hand, and training them upon the brightly shining sun, he promptly gave me New York time to the second. Setting my watch in accordance with the captain's time, I proved same at the first opportunity, and when assured of its accuracy I complimented the genial captain on his exactness.

Sea-faring men, when arrayed in tight-fitting tunics, beautified with brass buttons and imitation gold braid, wantonly attract their butterfly feminine passengers to such an extent that ships have been known to be neglected by the gallant officers, while yielding to the fascinating entreaties of the fair

sex to entertain them while idly crossing to and fro. Less gaudy gold braid would, therefore, increase the safety of ocean travel. The scarlet cloth of the British "Tommy Atkins" on land, and the bright and shining apparel of the sailor at sea, prove far too fetching for the average gullible feminine to resist. She suddenly surrenders to either.

A common sight, therefore, presents itself to the observer in every British seaport, where soldiers, blue-jackets from warships and sailors from the merchant marine, abound. It is the adherence of the girls to these attractively ornamented and medal-wearing adorned boys, almost to the rigid exclusion of even good-looking civilians.

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VOYAGE 6

December, 1907, saw me again at sea on an Allan steamship. Sailing from Boston to Glasgow on the Numidian, we were scheduled to reach our respective homes for the Christmastide. This turned out to be a miscalculation, as we did not dock in Glasgow until the 26th day of December. Our passage over was prolific with many little incidents. Rough weather was encountered, and we were tempest tossed to a far greater degree than anything I had hitherto experienced. Very few ladies shipped, so it was a stag party almost complete.

Among the most interesting of the men aboard two rather elderly Scotchmen carried off that distinction. They had been sent out as a spying deputation, and were returning to report upon both the United States and Dominion of Canada to their friends. After a month's investigation, during which, according to their own story, they traveled inland short hazy days, when they could behold the beauties of the country from their car windows but for a short time daily. However, they imagined that they saw it all, and by them I was almost convinced that what I found out pertaining to America covering a period of more than a score years was infinitesimal compared to their discoveries. Suffice to say that they were full to the brim with evil report concerning America for the delectation of their countrymen.

I have often regretted that some reliable provision has not been made for the proper piloting of such delegates through the country they were contemplating to adopt, whereby they would see the maximum of good and the minimum of bad and discouraging.

As we approached the end of this, my sixth voyage, a rather new and novel incident came up. Word reached the cabin passengers that a Jewess in the steerage gave birth to a baby. Of course, with some people, a baby at all times is interesting, but under such unfavorable surroundings still more so. The ship surgeon having assured the lady passengers that both mother and child were doing well, nothing would satisfy them but to bring the child to the saloon for infantile inspection. Hurriedly they did so. After several days routine, with nothing but the ordinary taking place day after day, life grew somewhat boresome. Then think of the novelty of a newborn babe, suddenly cast in the laps of women and girls. Of course, it was passed around from one to one, all interested, all admiring, some even pretending to claim that it looked like its father, an individual they had never seen.

A souvenir plate was procured from the dining-saloon steward, a sixpenny collection was taken, and a guinea Christmasbox for the child and sick mother realized. The company's steward refusing to donate the plate, the writer paid for it, an additional expense of one shilling and sixpence, all of which was gladly contributed. To me the furore caused by the unexpected advent of an infant aboard a passenger steamer on the broad Atlantic was quite surprising ; and more particularly so upon this occasion when the baby ownership belonged in the steerage, while the parties so engrossed with interest were cabin.

On land I had seen many such performances. In America there are many feminine child-haters. Whimsically, many of that species would kill a youngster with kindness at one moment, while the next they would shrink away from their childish touch with a scowl and a frown. Such moody methods never could be connived at by the writer. My ideas are to be one thing or the other at all times and under all circumstances. The superficial person, whenever given a chance, betrays his, or

her, insincerity in a most un-mistakable manner. Acting natural is a personal gift not to be despised. This can be displayed as well at sea as on land.

Down the narrow Clyde river, with its banks on either side a hive of shipbuilding industry, the deck sightseer is wonderingly entertained. Seagoing vessels are seen undergoing construction in all stages. Keels just laid, skeleton shipmoulds far advanced, massive traveling cranes, trip hammers and riveting machines, all tend to make a din hard for the ear to understand. The Clyde is one of the most interesting waterways in the world. Glasgow, the city it runs through is also a place of commercial activity, scarcely second to any center of its size in the world.

In the saloon of a coastwise steamer plying between Glasgow and Dublin, another passenger and myself were having a sociable of “Stout” together. Within convenient reach on the table lay a small plateful of cut cheese. I reached out and partook of a piece. At once an attendant stepped up to me, demanding six-pence for the wee chunk of cheese. I paid him. How different to the United States, I mused. In that bountiful land of plenty, where free lunches accompany liquid refreshments, many a foreigner would be amazed.

Using a nautical term, we experienced a “dirty” night sailing to Dublin. Curiously enough little haste is made in landing passengers there. Usually they take their time in depositing their living cargoes ashore, often waiting to turn the prow of their vessels seaward, so that they are ready to steam ahead at the outgoing signal. Growing restless at their slowness in placing a gangplank, I swore emphatically. At this juncture an Irish wit, standing upon the brink of the dock, lustily yelled out, “Let his lordship off.” How fortunate, I thought, that all the pin-headed and pin-moneyed American heiresses were out of sight and hearing at the time, or my matrimonial future would be assured.

Upwards of twenty-five years ago the Steamship Parisian (Allan liner), was considered a first-class Atlantic greyhound. Now she had come to be listed at even less than second-class. On June 4, 1907, in London, England, I embarked upon her. Next day we put in at Havre, France, for cargo and Frenchmen. In the old days the Parisian had navigated the waters of the deep, carrying many nobles and notables. But on this trip she was scheduled to convey a few illustrious passengers also.

A Montreal gentleman, who served as a Canadian commissioner at the Dublin exposition held the previous summer, and myself chummed it very pleasantly all the way across. He being a Canadian politician of no mean activity, and the writer a political worker of indifferent repute in the United States, many an hour we whiled away in each other's staterooms recounting our checkered political experiences.

Quite a number of our French friends joined us at Havre. As the men and women from France are always suavely interesting, we were glad to have them with us. As Frenchmen are no great lovers of icewater, they were liberally supplied with table wines at each meal. Consequently large decanters containing two kinds of domestic wines (white and red) were placed upon their tables at every sitting. This was the very first time in all my checkered career that I felt like denying my Irish nationality, and passing myself off as a Frenchman. Table icewater, I considered, just as objectionable to an Irishman as a Frenchman. When I sought an explanation concerning the whys and the wherefores of the discrimination—one people subsisting on unfiltered water, while another class drank wine—I was told by an obliging steward that the French government, when subsidizing the steamship company to carry on a French-Canadian trade and ship communication, table wine should be served travelers of the French republic. Here, I thought, was another instance where the short-comings of the American republic were emphasized.

Under the aegis of the Montrealer and myself, two comely English girls were safely landed, and handed over by us to their awaiting young men at the landing stage, each having a fiance, who had gone before to prepare a mansion preliminary to matrimony. They were now going to enjoy the fruits of their speculation and preparation.

Enjoying thoroughly summerlike weather on this voyage, my usual dose of mal de mer was omitted. Shuffleboard, and many other deck games, were indulged in, and the immaculately white-garmented strutting Englishman, and fastidious Frenchman were adepts in all things pertaining to sea life and amusements. The smokeroom and bar attachment were pleasing pastime resorts.

These untraveled gentlemen were convinced that they were going to the Canadian promised land, and once there their toil and worry would eternally cease. My Montreal friend and myself did not wish to spoil their fleeting moments of exquisite pleasure by disillusioning them. They would be up against the rough corners soon enough. Unless very fortunate, Canadian thrift and dirt would rub so threateningly close to their fine linen pants as to soil them. We had seen such things happen before, and would not be surprised to see the same occurrences take place again.

Muscular steerage passengers, willing to rough it from the starting point, would prove more up to the requirements of undeveloped Canada, than cabin tourists, seeking fortune-making openings, who could not even on the passage thither forego the luxuries of deck chairs, steamer rugs, fancy smokes, wines and liquors, in addition to ship stewards extra attendance. Alas, the Dominion of Canada has been the Mecca for far too many of this type of settlers in the past. The man who is able and willing to enter into a muscle tussle with part of the earth's surface in Canada is the man of the hour.

Quebec city being reached, our ship came alongside the dock, in order to have the immigration officials of both countries—Canada and the United States—pass upon all the passengers, and take the third-class off. Between a Canadian officer and a young Londoner there was quite a parley. Having got his name, and where he came from, the officer rather sharply said : “ How much money have you ?” Our young friend evidently considering this a rather impertinent question seemed slow in answering.

“ My gracious, I have no money at all.”

“ What, no money at all ! Where are you going ?”

“ To Sintaluta.”

“ What are you going to do there ?”

“ I am going to study fawming.” (farming).

“ How are you going to get there ?”

“ Aw, a clergyman is going to meet me at Montreal to give me a pound to buy my food on the train.”

“ What then ?”

“ Another clergyman will meet me at Sintaluta, and will take me and ‘ introdooce’ me to the ‘ fawmer’ I’m going to study ‘ fawming’ with.” He was passed on.

A very nice genteel boy of twenty years indeed, but wholly unfitted for western prairie life. Canada has not yet got to a point where it can easily assimilate such empire-building gentility.

Next day our ship left the historic city of Quebec, and nosed its way up the St. Lawrence river to Montreal, 162 miles distant. In doing so we passed the calamitous collapsed bridge, which disaster sacrificed some sixty-five lives, one of the worst bridge building mishaps in the history of any country.

To properly tip stewards on shipboard, and other servitors on land, is a problem of some importance. Traveling by sea, I generally use three employees, who are entitled to gratuities. They are my

table steward, bedroom steward and bathroom steward. These men I have always found very decent and willing to serve me in every particular. "While a great many travelers complain of the tip evil, I have never found ground for complaint of that kind yet. Ordinary common sense should govern a man's generosity in this connection as well as all others. The servitor, who adds extra touches, and thoughtful care, to his daily routine earns his little cash courtesy, and the donor is only paying a well-earned debt when donating. "Tipless" this or that does not appeal to me. I am wholly influenced by the surplus courtesies shown. It must be borne in mind that travelers are always subject to target talk practice. Even menials of the precocious kind will comment behind your back, and often to your face, regarding your plan of action. If you throw your coin lavishly away, you are dubbed a "sucker," that never was out from home before. If you are noticeably stingy, you will be taunted a "cheap guy." So there you are. Use common sense and discretion, and be totally impervious to all menial remarks. Hit a happy middle ground and remain placid.

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VOYAGE 8

Friday, November 20, 1909, about 11 :30 p. m., I once more boarded an Allan Atlantic liner in Montreal for London. On the voyage there we stopped at Quebec, Havre (France), putting in twenty-four hours, or more, in each city, before finally reaching the port of destination, Englands capitol and the world's metropolis. We had a mixed passenger list, English speaking folk, French and French-Canadians. The Pomeranian was a slow, but sure, little craft, and gradually and gracefully she glided over the thundering and disturbed waters of the St. Lawrence river and Atlantic. Taking this route, one is in sheltered waters for a couple of days. This enables the sick-inclined traveler to secure his sealegs ere he gets out into the mountain-high waves.

Throwing the fact that I was an Irish-Canuck-Yankee to the winds on this voyage, I hob-nobbed with the French passengers as one of their own. This "dirty Irish trick" ensured me a supply of table wine all the way across. As on the previous voyage, the dainty boys of France were so wined. No matter who a man may be, a glass of table claret will, if daintily handled, give him a Frenchy appearance. My knowledge of their language was quite imperfect, but as long as I could say or motion "pass the wine" I got along swimmingly with them.

Sporty inclined gentlemen aboard ship on this my eighth voyage, enjoyed themselves gambling and tipping each night after they had regained their lost health through seasickness. The ship surgeon, who happened to be a jolly Irishman, and a French-Canadian doctor, developed into serious fun-makers along towards the conclusion of the trip. Thus the evening prior to our landing our Havre passengers there was enacted a blood-curdling scene in strictly wild west fashion. The gentlemen named passed the early part of the night in the usual way; but on this occasion seemed to have got far too close to the "cup that cheers," and felt giddy accordingly.

Conviviality on their part did not create a corresponding amount of pleasantry on the part of all other innocent onlookers. Therefore, while quietly chatting with some of the lady passengers in the dining saloon, I was much annoyed, and the ladies were much affrighted, to notice the fun-loving French and Irish lads, some of them armed with revolvers, rifles and bowie-knives, playfully tagging around after each other, and pretending that they were going to enact the most dreadful crimes in the way of bloodletting. The ladies quickly disappeared to their staterooms, while I tried to calm the combatants. However, there was little danger of serious trouble, as the head steward assured me that he had carefully examined the deadly weapons himself and found them unloaded.

Only one really horrifying accident unavoidably occurred during the entire voyage. A rough and boisterous sea so upset our table accoutrements one evening at dinner as to spill a whole glass of wine, belonging to a Frenchman, right onto a non-drinking Canadian. This was a fiery liquor baptism the colonial victim suffered, which seemed a laughable farce. A starboard lurch caused it. Luckily the splashing tumbler remained unbroken, and there was no other serious harm, save the humiliation experienced by the Canadian tee-totaler, a species of abstainer quite numerous in that land. The table

guards were on, but our poor friend was not protected. "We were wave-tossed worse than we imagined.

Making trans-Atlantic voyages on these port-calling steamships afford those so traveling a taste of private yachting, by giving them a chance to go ashore and visit the seaports entered. This feature the majority of the men passengers take quick advantage of. Confined on shipboard for several days, they feel like relaxing their crippled muscles by walking exercise. Furthermore, foreign cities-by-the-sea are exceptionally interesting to everybody used to navigating. Ships flying different foreign flags are also harbored in these ports of entry and call, all of which tend to enliven and interest.

Occasionally the boys, when on land, take a little too much personal liberty. They indulge a wee bit too freely. So, once in a while, some one comes back to the ship bowled up. His brain being lubricated, and his tongue unloosed, he undertakes to tell the rest of his fellow-passengers about his adventures ashore, including many things he saw and did.

No member, or admirer, of the British empire can fall into a foreign port, no matter how brief the stay made may be, without entertaining a deep and lasting impression concerning the greatness of that wonderful little country, the hub of the universe—England. Its sea-carrying craft are to be seen, conspicuously flying the Union Jack, in all parts of the world, regardless of remoteness, or backwardness from the great centers of civilization or commerce.

Passenger accommodations and comforts aboard the little Pomeranian were not as luxurious as on many of the other ships belonging to the Allan Steamship Company. But the extreme civility of the men in charge, all through the voyage, more than compensated the folks aboard for any embarrassing deficiencies in matters of convenience. Captain Anderson was ever willing to give inquisitive passengers any information sought, regarding seafaring life, nautical lore and the hardships incident thereto.

Many of these rather ancient vessels now carry only two classes of passengers, known as one-class cabin and steerage. The Pomeranian was one of this kind. She was also one of the ancient and hand-made kind, very seaworthy. It being somewhat of a winter trip, heavy seas ran, large waves washed our decks, and windy weather howled through the ship's ropes and rigging. On comparatively private little ships of this type family usages are more frequently the rule governing those aboard. Bells are not continually ringing. Bedroom stewards gently tap stateroom doors to announce to the sleeping passengers the dressing hour. Even the usual daily inspection by the commander, doctor and chief steward, is occasionally omitted. This is a formality gone through on all passenger-carrying vessels at 10 o'clock a. m. daily. Yes, and divine services on Sundays, usually held in the music-saloon, are not insisted upon. Money-contributing vocal and instrumental concerts are not held. Neither do we be bothered with moving-picture shows, advertising the beauties and industrial possibilities of the Dominion of Canada, a hard-worked feature of the desperate efforts put forth in recent years, by governmental authority, to populate that "Lady of Snows" land, as Poet Kipling aptly styled it.

These are a few of the appreciative advantages accorded modestly inclined tourists when traveling back and forth across the Atlantic on supposedly slow and out-of-date steamers. Other comforts are obtainable also. You sleep better. There is a minimum of shiver and vibration. Far less formality, less frigidity among people of the hotel type, and more family-like inter-mixing.

On the whole, leisurely and experienced tourists take more real delight and joy out of a ten-day sea voyage than can be crowded into a five-day limit. Thus it is already becoming apparent to shipowners that, except for fast mail and business purposes, the faster a vessel glides over the briny deep the less popular she will prove in the ease of leisurely inclined rambler, who figure upon the sea voyage forming a very prominent and interesting part of their holiday-making tour of distant lands. To the untraveled this phase of time and travel has not been duly weighed by them; nor will it at first meet with their casual approval. But when once experienced they will readily see into the philosophy of it. More recent accessions to Atlantic passenger-carrying fleets, are of the slower, rather than faster, type of steamship. Size, not speed, is the problem now being solved by ship architects.

After an acknowledged rough and “dirty” voyage, the winds and sea beating scandalously upon our good little ship, we entered the mouth of the Thames, shortly thereafter entering London streets. That city being throughout my lifetime of the greatest historical interest to me, I tarried amid its treasures of wealth and greatness for many days. Later on I visited other parts of the noted little country, finally sailing on a small steamer from Liverpool to Dublin.

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VOYAGE 9

On this visit to Ireland it was my intention to cut it short, not making my stay last longer than about six weeks. But that country, always possessing more than ordinary interest for me, literally compelled me to remain about six months. Every moment of this stretch of time was more than interesting. The Irish people, as usual, presented varieties of cuteness and cleverness not hitherto observed by me.

However, when the time came that I was imperatively obliged to move, I was much surprised to learn that all steamships were booked full for weeks in advance, so mad was the spring rush for Canadian ports.

Times had at last wonderfully improved. Cabin passengers from Ireland were now the rule and not the exception as in days of yore. It was, therefore, possible to secure a steerage booking, while cabin was out of the question. Through the dropping out of an early booked passenger, I was enabled to secure his cancelled berth.

Accordingly I reported at Londonderry on the evening of Saturday, May 21, 1910, went aboard a tender at 6 a. m. Sunday, sailed down Lough Foyle, embarking on the Allan steamship Ionian, which lay off Moville, having left Glasgow the evening previous.

Early in the Sabbath morning though it was, quite a large crowd of warm-hearted people were at the dock to see us off, many boarding the tender to go the full limit allowable, while the vast concourse not so favored spread themselves out along the docks, waving their handkerchief farewells. Some were shedding tears because their friends were saying what might prove to be a final goodby, while others again had moistened eyes by reason of the fact that they weren't going along also. Few were strictly dry-eyed, and all were undoubtedly heart-moved. But the emigrant ship had long since lost its terrors. In the miserable times gone by, a departure for foreign fields involved a funeral-like procession, where family weepers and wailers led the way to the ship landing, sympathizing neighbors feeling not a whit less mournful. Now an exodus seemed to furnish an occasion for mirth and gaiety, with a few surface sobs, and heart throbs, by members of the family immediately bereaved incidental and natural. Emigration was at last robbed of its heart-rending sting.

Most of those going had been there before, and expected to return to the homeland again and again in all human possibility, for separation from the Emerald Isle, indefinitely, is never a part of the average Irishman's, or Irishwoman's, programme. Others again were going home-seeking accompanied by returning friends. The meagre few going alone, and for the first time, minus friends, relatives, or neighborly acquaintances, at the other end to receive and coach them were not many. How different in the days of the dim and miserable past ! Then the people were green and uneducated, the vicissitudes encountered traveling thither discouraging, and conditions on the other side of the wild and pioneering kind, all tending to dishearten the poor unfortunates compelled to take the lead in those early days.

Our tender sided up by the Liner Ionian. A shipload of passengers from Scotland craned their necks over the deck bulwarks and ship bulkheads to curiously catch a glimpse of the oncoming Irish. They were amply rewarded, for 120 strong they marched up the gangplank, getting lost in the gaping Scottish crowd already aboard. The weather was balmy and the scene rather romantic. Passengers' hand and hold, “Wanted” and “Not Wanted,” baggage was quickly shouldered and rustled from the smaller to the larger vessel by quick-moving ship roustabouts. Final adieus were spoken, kissed and

handshaken, the tender turned its prow eastward in the direction of Lough Foyle, while the steamship faced westward towards the River St. Lawrence, and we were off.

All that Sunday forenoon everybody was astir and aglow with confusion and excitement, getting their berths and bearings. Moreover sentimental folk eagerly watched the last traces of land gradually fade away. Who knows, it might be their last long glimpse of terra firma ? The stewards in the meanwhile were not idle. They had to allot diningroom seats for first and second sittings, owing to the large cargo of human souls entrusted to them. To please everybody was their main anxiety. To attain that end was something of a human impossibility. The first bugle call would be too early for some; and the second an hour later, too late for others. Then whole families had to be seated at the same table, regardless of whether the children were large or small. All of this furnished room for confusion and discontent. But trained men were in the harness, and everything was amicably and smoothly settled in due course of time, and by the exercise of patience and forbearance.

Mine was a portside berth, with a baywindow into the sea. It was a makeshift sleeping place, with three others also occupying bunks therein.

The days passed on. Deck dancing daily passed the time away for many so inclined. Scotsmen, kilties and bagpipes paced the decks, rendering thrilling music. Cabin concerts, and steerage entertainments of the singing and smoking kind, were held in both ends of the ship, respectively. Parlor games and deck pastimes were enjoyed by many. Even athletic sports, of a prize-winning and prize-receiving nature, were carried on to while away the afternoon hours. Into these the Scotch lassies enthusiastically threw themselves. They were most delightfully charming.

This was by long odds the gayest and largest crowd I had thus far in my traveling career met aboard ship. Mirth and merriment were so rife as to cause consternation. Something terrible seemed pending. It came.

On the early morning of an unlucky Friday a coal gas explosion in the bunkers took place, making a terrific noise and terrifying the poor unfortunate passengers located in that particular portion of the ship far above. Luckily the hatchway was blown out, the concussion going upward instead of downward, in which case results would be far more disastrous. Blacked by coal gas, and shocked from fear, I was thrown out of my narrow bed, and it was some moments before I could regain my shattered senses. The shot upward sunk the ship downward deeper into the water, so I imagined I was far under the water already.

Hearing no one else making an outcry, and seeing nobody around, I began to think that I was being made the butt of a huge joke. But these fears were quickly dissipated by the terrible wailing that at once burst forth from women and children, in their night garments, already huddled together in the passageways of the ship. Panicky-stricken all were in a frenzy of fright. None knew what to do, or felt composed enough to do it even if they did. Lamentations of the most heart-rending kind wore chorused by the terrified feminine passengers, but happily all was of short duration.

Officers and stewards were promptly on hand, calming the affrighted passengers, and assuring them that there was no danger. Magic-like their fears were quelled, the uproar ceased, and the scorched and disarranged berths were made habitable once more.

Trained and unexcited men are valuable at times of sorrow and stress. Never have I met a time when a horror-stricken situation was so neatly righted. Tact and thought were the ingredients used.

Gallantly and sympathetically officers and stewards led the distraught and terror-stricken women and children to the dining saloons and music rooms, fetched them their clothes, served them tea, and made them as comfortable as the circumstances would permit. Within a very short time order was restored, all were composed and consoled, and life aboard settled down to its normal state.

This little accident taught me a lesson. No matter how heroically one might feel at times of coolness ; it is rarely a man is gifted with the genius of doing the right thing at the right time under fearful provocation. When extreme danger arises, self-preservation is an uppermost thought with all. Married men, having been accustomed to look out for the care and welfare of wife and children, are much more apt to jump to the aid and succor of the distressed upon the impulse of the moment than the single individual, who has never had fatherly or family love and anxiety form a part of his protecting care. Such singleness of life accustoms one to seek his, or her own welfare when danger is imminent. Even the most tender-hearted are apt, on the spur of the moment, to first seek their own safety.

All this recalls a Pat and Mike story. Briefly it is as follows :

Thrown out of a rowboat one day, Pat promptly swam ashore. Then he returned and brought back Mike. A bystander, noticing Pat's method of saving life, said : " Pat, why didn't you bring Mike in with you the first time ?" " Faith, I wanted to save meself first," was the reply.

Heroism momentarily performed is a human gift few possess. When a calamity happens on land, the worst is usually over with the first distressful occurrence. Not so on board a ship in mid-Atlantic. When explosions, fires, or such things take place internally on shipboard, other dire consequences may speedily follow. She might suddenly sink, carrying her living freight down with her ; be thrown helplessly into the sea ; or in manning lifeboats order and composure may not be easily maintained, the mad mob rush capsizing and swamping the boats being lowered. These grave possibilities in ocean catastrophes test heroism far beyond the probabilities of like events on land. Those who passed through that severe ordeal of suffocating coal gas, will never again hanker for the privilege of being eyewitnesses to similar scenes. It made a memorable milestone in their mind and memory.

A shipload of homeseekers presents a many-sided problem. As the observer, with analytical eye, furtively scans the people as they troop by, curiosity seizes him. Inquiry unravels interesting things, as nearly all are willing to tell of their ambitions and prospects. Women and children are going out to reunite with the husband and father, who has gone before to blaze the way for them. Instead of smothering up their motives for going abroad, they take delight in rehearsing the many good things in store for them, all the fatherly work of an enterprising husband, he having truthfully kept them advised as to his doings and prospects in his adopted land. Past experiences have taught them that what has been written them by him can be strictly relied upon. They are, therefore, jubilant at the thought of being again united under one family roof, with the additional novelty of being in a new country, where life and surroundings will be radically different from that in the old home, as well as more flattering opportunities for business and progress presented.

Then again we meet the festive fiancee. She is joyfully going out to be joined matrimonially to her betrothed. Of these we meet many. True to their girls, whether they have been engaged or not, the manly old countryman, be he English, Scotch, or Irish, " makes good," in this particular as well as in any other.

Again we meet the newly-married couple. Ere they set sail on the ocean they embarked on the sea of matrimony, and are now on their way to seek a desirable home. Blindly infatuated by love, they frequently start out knowing not whither. But they get awakened in due course of time, the honeymoon ceases, and life in stern reality is braved.

We also see the buoyant and hopeful young girl, womanly starting out into the world with nothing more attractive than domestic usefulness in view, but which is often escaped through the agency of matrimonial bliss.

There is also the young man, brimful of spirits and enthusiasm, who keeps on flattering himself with the feeling that he is going to return home some day in the near future, surprising all his friends and neighbors; also astounding them with the " weight of money" he has fortunately seized and laid hands upon. Somehow such aspirations get rudely quieted before he gets far in his money-making mania, and the rough corners he has been rounding have worn off his money-getting keenness. He

soon finds himself plugging along, in a mediocre manner, just like the great majority of his working companions.

Many stories are related regarding the ease where-with money is picked up in America. May I be pardoned for citing an instance here ? It is : A just landed young man, walking up from the ship, even though naturally staring skyward in amazement at the new world sights, glanced groundward long enough to spy a twenty-dollar goldpiece, which he promptly picked up. Just then he met a blind beggar. Handing him the coin he said : “ Take this, my poor man. You’re blind and can’t see. I can, and will pick up lots more.” Ere he did so he suffered many optical illusions. In fact it was all a delusion and a snare.

But this feeling prevails to an unsafe extent in nearly all the old countries regarding America. Nor do many actions of Americans abroad help to dispel such delusions. Their vulgar display of coin certainly does not. Often have I watched a lot of wharf youngsters eagerly pouncing upon one another while picking up the small “ chicken feed” thrown from the crowded decks by generous American travelers, who took fiendish delight in a birdseye view of the unseemly scramble by the street gamins beneath. In this way their pennies afford them their first foreign entertainment, which is given on the dock ere the ship is roped to the landing, or the gangplank laid ashore. Nor is it necessary for American coin-givers to leave their own land, in order to enjoy the sight of juvenile scramblers fighting for their stray coin no matter how small. Truly these things lead the untaught to consider America a land that floweth with milk and money.

Before concluding my observations on this my ninth voyage across the Atlantic, I must not neglect a word concerning a class of passengers in whom I became very much interested.

They were the old people, who, with all the vim and vigor of youth and ambition, were on their way to join and live the balance of their short lifetimes with their sons, daughters, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, or possibly other near relatives taking sufficient interest in them to place a home at their disposal.

Some of these patriarchal Scotchmen and women were advanced in years, having soared as high as seventy-five and eighty. But they belonged to the old stock, and were aggressive accordingly.

May they all be abundantly rewarded for their pluck and enterprise.

May the new world provide happiness and joy for them far in excess of anything the old world ever offered.

May their declining years be fraught with the richest and choicest blessings, that have hitherto been their lot to enjoy.

May Providence protect and provide for them far more bountifully than their wildest expectations ever conceived.

Furthermore may they become so charmed with their adopted country, when the time comes to lay their bones away, that prairie burial may not be considered a chastening after death, even though far removed from the cemeteries of their forefathers.

Without supreme confidence in an All-Wise Being these christian-like Scotsmen and women would never have ventured so far in the eleventh hour of their existence, from the land of their nativity and ancestry. For doing so they deserve a full measure of unalloyed happiness from now to the end. My humble wishes are that it will be unstintingly bestowed upon them. Their child-like faith so merits.

Again entering the Straits of Belle Isle, we sailed through the Gulf of St. Lawrence, entered the St. Lawrence river, and tied-up in the city of Quebec. There above us the frowning cliff, back of which

lay the Plains of Abraham, the battlefield on which the two noted generals (Wolfe, the English ; and Montcalm, the French) received their mortal wounds, seemed to reach out and bid us welcome. Those viewing it for the first time were keenly interested. It was Sunday afternoon.

Next morning our third-class passengers landed and took train to Montreal. All others continued to that city aboard the ship, reaching it by way of the St. Lawrence. It was a pleasant and picturesque sail, and much admired by those making it, regardless of how frequently they had done so in the past. Towns and villages on either side, small islands and trees, all seemed to commingle with masts and funnels, making a most absorbing sight.

By eight o'clock in the evening everybody had cleared the deck. Our baggage underwent the usual customs inspection. This formality concluded, we were at liberty to continue to our respective destinations.

Those booked inland lost no time in hastening to the railroad depots. Long trains, with a varied assortment of cars, colonist sleepers, and tourist awaited their reception. Worry and confusion were rampant, but all got started somehow. Another ship having docked simultaneously with us, also heavily laden with human cargo, intensified the bustle.

The Canadian Pacific railway, Canada's most notable trans-continental highway, negotiated the biggest part of the incomers and ongoers.

The Grand Trunk System, with its various steel ramifications into the United States, as well as the Dominion of Canada, distributed passengers in both countries. Also the Grand Trunk Pacific, a coast-to-coast auxiliary of the parent " System," carried others into the far Canadian Northwest, by way of the States.

Visiting both these railway stations, I saw many of them off, and wished them Godspeed.

Two days later I left Montreal, in Quebec province, for Toronto, province of Ontario. Canada's crack train conveyed me between these two important Canadian cities. It is known as the "International Limited," having Chicago for its terminal.

Prom Toronto I went into the country for a month.

Six weeks later I reached my favorite American city, so proudly guarding, in sentinel-like fashion, the shores of Lake Michigan—Chicago.

The Irish-Canuck-Yankee (c1913)

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