

For Dominion Presbyterian.

Four Weeks at Sea.

BY J. L. C.

On the 5th of September, 1895, the Norwegian Barque "Beda," laden with deals set sail from Chatham, N.B. She was bound for Cork, Ireland. I had been in poor health and was advised to take a slow or long sea-voyage. I planned first to take a trading steamer which would make one Atlantic trip in twelve or fifteen days, but failing to find a passage in such, I agreed with Captain Halversen to embark on the "Beda." She was a staunch wooden vessel and a good sailor. The captain assured me he would probably reach Cork in twenty or twenty-five days. I had never been to sea and ventured on this ship with some hesitation but with high hopes of receiving benefit to my health. What will men not do to regain bodily health and strength? The trip down the Miramichi river, some thirty-five miles was void of any incident, and when the tug bade us farewell on our entering the Gulf of St. Lawrence I felt we were now at the mercy of the winds and waves. These were kind while crossing the gulf. We passed to the south of Newfoundland, having sighted Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton Island on the South and Magdalen Islands and St. Paul on the North. In crossing the great bank lying south of Newfoundland, which has an extent of six hundred miles by two hundred, we caught many large codfish which gave us fresh meat for several days. This was a welcome change from the table routine of beef and pork. The Norse sailors use much soup, strong pea-soup being preferred to other kinds. Pea-soup is a good dish for strong, hardy sailors, but when prepared with fat pork is rather powerful for an invalid even if it be relieved somewhat by morsels of dried apples.

September is expected to be a windy month, but this proved an exception to the rule. The sun apparently crossed the equator without disturbing the atmosphere of earth, and the proverbial equinoctial storms of September did not materialise in 1895. Many days we were becalmed and I basked in the warm sun on the deck of the vessel. The captain busied himself making a sleigh for his boys at home in Fredericstadt, Norway. The sailors were employed cleaning and painting the upper parts of the vessels. Twice during the voyage we were enshrouded in deep fog and the fog horn was kept sounding at regular interval. To warn any vessels that might happen to come into our neighborhood. It so happened that none came and we heard no response to our warning notes through the thick mists. The fogs cleared away and were followed by fresh breezes that carried us swiftly along, and cheered our spirits, because it was disheartening when becalmed to find ourselves making no headway and see the stately steamships pass us and soon be out of sight, carrying its living freight to the desired haven. When head winds blew and we had to go now south and then north, our approach to our journey's end seemed very slow in this zigzag fashion. But progress we made and by the end of September we were, according to the captain's reckoning, some five hundred

miles southwest of Ireland. If September was calm, October opened with a storm, which the travellers on the "Beda" will not soon forget. The gale struck us at midnight on the opening morning of the new month, and before the captain could reach the deck one sail was carried away and the others were threatened with a similar fate. The crew were all summoned to the saving of the ship—some men from their watch and others from their sleep. From my room off the cabin I could hear the commanding voice of the captain and the obedient response of the men. The sails were quickly reduced and fastened to their bars and we drifted with the wind which was blowing from the northwest. The storm continued for three days and the sea became a continent of mountain waves. Our vessel was, in the trough and more times than I could number the waves dashed completely over us. The decks were washed, the cabin flooded, and residence in our floating home became decidedly uncomfortable. On the third day the captain for the first time showed signs of uneasiness, and to my enquiry said, "I fear we are drifting past Ireland, and should this storm continue we may require another month to get back to Cork." This was saddening news, but our fears were groundless because next day the wind abated and the sails were opened to the breeze. The captain was able to take his bearing under difficulties on a rolling sea and from a darkened sky, and he turned the ship's head to the northeast. In the evening of the fourth day he said to me, "If I have not miscalculated, to-night about 10 o'clock we shall see Fastnet Light," i. e., the light from one light house on the southwest corner of Ireland. He had not miscalculated and when he cheerily shouted from the high mast at half past nine—"I see the lights," the hearts of all on the deck below were lighted up in gratitude. Through a drizzling rain we sailed along the south of Ireland till we reached the spacious and beautiful harbor of Queens-town. On the 5th of October in the evening, we were fastened to the quay in the city of Cork, twelve miles from the harbor up the river Lee.

Have you had a kindness shown?
Pass it on.
Twas not given for you alone -
Pass it on.
Let it travel down the years,
Let it wipe another's tears,
Till in heaven the deed appears—
Pass it on.

Morning Thoughts.

BY J. R. MILLER, D. D.

People need from us nothing so much as good cheer and encouragement. Life is hard for most and needs inspiration.

It is good one day in seven to look up into the face of God, to get new hope, fresh uplift, strength for other days.

The best friendship is that which inspires us to do better, to do our best.

It is worth while to do even the smallest kindnesses as we go along the way. Nothing is lost. No dewdrop perishes, but sinking into the flower, makes it sweeter.

Strength and beauty combine in the making of the truest manliness.

Two good rules for life are, Never be discouraged. Never be a discourager.

There is a blessing in hardness. Enduring it with courage and persistence makes us strong.

The message of Christmas is joy and peace to him who has ears to hear.

Heart Songs.

How many of them have been given to the world, and how tenderly true and human they are! How far reaching has been their influence, and how many wandering ones have been sung into safety! How many sinners have been brought to contrition and repentance by such heart songs as "Where is my Wandering Boy, To-night?" "The Ninety and Nine," "Almost Persuaded," "Throw Out the Life Line," and others, sung from the heart and reaching to other hearts!

From the time of David down to the present strong and highly spiritual natures have expressed their sweetest and tenderest thoughts in song. It was Chateaubriand who said: "Music is the child of prayer, the companion of religion." Men seemingly dead in trespasses and sins have been brought back to their better selves by the singing of some sweet and simple strain recalling home and mother and the days of their innocent childhood.

A band was once playing on the crowded street of a large city. Among those who listened to the lively airs the band has been playing was a young man not more than twenty-five years of age, but who looked much older because of the evil life he had led since his nineteenth year. Suddenly the band began to play "The Sweet By and By." The young man listened eagerly. It had been a long time since he had heard that tune—not since his Sunday school days; for, evil as he looked and evil as he was, he had once been a Sunday school boy and free from sin. How many times had his own lips sung of the land that is "fairer than day!" How firm had his faith once been in the Father who "waits over the way!" How many times had he heard his mother's clear, sweet voice singing of the Sweet By-and-By! It had been her favorite song, and now she had crossed to "that beautiful shore," and he—his eyes filled with tears and his lips quivered as he thought of how he had put aside the gift of the Father's love.

Every note of that old song of his childhood went straight to the young man's heart. It appealed to him as nothing else had done for years. It fanned into full light the low flame of his desire to be a better man. Only a little spark of his manhood was left, but from that hour it grew stronger and clearer, and his reformation began at that moment, and did not end until he had put aside the evil in his life and become a Christian man among Christian men.

More than one "wandering boy" has had his heart touched to its utmost depths by the words:

"Oh, where is my wandering boy to-night,
The child of my love and care?"

No one but the God who inspired the writing of a song like that knows how far-reaching and heart-touching its influence has been.—Young People's Weekly.