

# Letters from Bermuda.



## LETTER I.

HAMILTON NOV., 18—.

DEAR H.—We arrived safely at Hamilton, Bermuda, after a rough and stormy passage of four days—though three days is the usual time—so you may conjecture how grievously we both suffered from *mal de mer*.

For two days we had a lively "cross sea," which rendered locomotion very inconvenient, if not impossible. The wind, tearing and blustering through the cordage, etc., added to the din, but did not improve our appetite for dinner. Some boots and valises were having a game of leap-frog on the floor of the state-room, which at times seemed almost perpendicular. The obliging steward told us encouragingly it was "only a gale, a bit of sea on," but

"O what a storm of sea we passed!  
High mountain waves, and foaming  
showers,  
And battling winds, with savage blast."

Twenty-four hours after leaving New York harbor we experienced a decided change of temperature. It had become very warm, and the rolling and shaking of the vessel was, to say the least of it, most unpleasant. We were informed by the captain that we were crossing the Gulf Stream, on the eastern edge of which are situated the Bermuda Islands.

This "River of the Ocean," of which you have often heard, is one of the wonders of the world. It issues from the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico, rushes with mighty power through

the channel which divides Florida from the Bahamas, and proceeds northward up the coast of the United States. As we neared Bermuda it became calmer.

"A beam of tranquility smiled in the west,  
The storms of the evening pursued us no more;  
And the wave, while it welcomed the moment of rest,  
Still heaved as remembering the ills that were o'er."

Those of the passengers who could remain on deck observed, when on the eastern edge of the Gulf Stream, large, floating masses of the Gulf weed called *sargassum bacciferum*, which was blown or drifted from the area known to navigators as the Sargasso Sea. It is said that when Christopher Columbus sailed through this region on that memorable voyage which resulted in the discovery of the new world, the appearance on the ocean of these immense masses of seaweed, intermingled with driftwood and vegetable matter, and bearing upon the surface myriads of mollusca, crustace, etc., confirmed his hopes of the proximity of land, and restored courage and confidence to his panic-stricken crew.

Another object which attracted the attention of the passengers were the flying fish, great numbers of which were observed darting from the water under the steamer's bow when she came within about 150 miles of the Islands.

It was the opinion of some ancient writers that birds, like fish, were ori-