

Letters from England.

II.

Steamship Anglo-Saxon, at Sea, July 1856.

THE ships which form this line are iron vessels, built in water-tight compartments. They are about 300 feet in length, but of only 30 feet beam, and very sharp in the bow. Being screw propellers, they combine the qualities of fast-sailing ships with the greater safety and certainty of steamers. The Anglo-Saxon has on her deck a spacious and handsome saloon in which 150 passengers can comfortably dine together, and her accommodations below are excellent.

Her appointed time for sailing was ten o'clock a.m.; and precisely at that hour the report of her guns informed us that our voyage homewards had commenced: five minutes afterwards we were rapidly steaming down the St. Lawrence. The commencement of our voyage was auspicious and agreeable to an unusual degree. Instead of being instantaneously plunged, as passengers by sea expect to be, into the miseries of sea-sickness, we had time to explore the different parts of our good ship, and to become acquainted with our fellow-passengers; while calm water, an unclouded sky, and a cool delicious breeze from the N.W. all served to enhance our enjoyment of the succession of striking and beautiful views, in which the banks of this noble river are so rich.

The following morning (Sunday) found us still in the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and there was a strong muster at the breakfast table. At the usual time, the ship's bell having been previously rung after the manner, and with all the effect of a church bell, divine service was performed; and it has rarely been my lot to speak on a more interesting occasion. The tables were well supplied with Prayer-Books and Bibles of the S. P. C. K.; the saloon was well filled, and most if not all of the cabin passengers were present, and took part in the service. The *Venite Exultemus* and the *Gloria Patri*, whenever it occurred, were sung with good effect; the sermon was listened to with much attention, and the 121st Psalm, by which it was preceded, was felt by all to be suitable for the occasion.

How gladly does the Christian traveller appropriate the promise contained in the last verse:

"At home, abroad, in peace, in war,
Thy God shall thee defend;
Conduct thee through life's pilgrimage
Safe to thy journey's end."

That there are dangers to which "those who travel by land or by water" are peculiarly exposed, cannot be doubted; but that whether "at home" or "abroad," we are equally under the protection of that Omniscient and Almighty Being, whose "eye is over all His works," is a consideration which may reassure the Christian, in whatever situation of danger he finds himself. Two things seem to be necessary in order that he may fully enjoy the comfort of this assurance. The first, that he be conscious of living a life of faith and holy obedience, such as may warrant him in regarding himself one of the "dear children" (Eph. v. 1) of that Heavenly Father, into whose family he was, at his baptism, adopted. There are few, it is to be hoped, who are so blindly relying on the privileges of their baptism as to be regarding themselves as by that alone, permanently fixed in a state of salvation. It was, indeed, our introduction into such a state, the sign and token of God's favor towards us, the means by which the relationship between the Heavenly Father and His adopted children was first established. But baptism is a covenant, of which, if we would abide in its privileges, we have our part to fulfil, for, "hereby do we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." (1 John ii. 3). And it is undoubtedly permitted to the earnest Christian, not only to have the approbation of his Heavenly Father, but also to be aware of his being in so happy a position. Such an assurance of the Divine favour cannot be maintained except by a life of prayer, of religious meditation, and of frequent converse with God, and these acts of piety can only consist with a holy life. Where this is the experience of the Christian, he will feel no uncomfortable disquietude, in whatever situation he may find himself, for he knows that, whatever may befall him, there is nothing which has power "to separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii. 39.)

But in order that the Christian may derive full comfort from the assurance that he is under the Divine protection, it is also necessary that he be fully conscious of being (so far as he can know it) in the path of duty, and engaged in performing the work assigned him. The disci-