

The good steamer *Hondo*, of the Honduras and Central America Line, on the 17th instant, with steam up and the aid of a tug, put out from her moorings at Brooklyn. Like many steamers on the tropical routes the *Hondo* is enveloped in several coats of white paint, and is a bright and cheerful object to the eye of the voyageur. Not being, as I have indicated, very sea-worthy myself, it was natural that I should feel somewhat anxious to learn the character for good behaviour of the steamer in which I was about to venture to the verge of "earth's central line."

This I found to be all that could be desired. There are larger vessels which sail the northern seas but none more staunch and sea-worthy than the *Hondo*, of sixteen hundred register, Clyde built, and by Duncan, a master hand.

If anything more were needed to ensure safety it soon appeared in the person of Captain Pearson, also of that ilk, the perfect embodiment of a sailor, who greeted me in the kindly Scotch fashion as I stepped on deck from having taken a glance at the great airy saloon, and a peep into the special cabin allotted to me.

A few minutes sufficed to carry us in to mid-stream, when the tug left us, and we held our course down the river in charge of a pilot.

It was growing dusky when Staten Island, which Mr. Erastus Winman has done so much to popularize as a watering place, was passed on our right, and Coney Island, so long a favourite resort in sunny weather, lay a little further out on our left.

The sun was just dipping below the horizon when, taking a general survey of the surrounding prospect, Liberty Island with Bartholdi's great Statue was seen looming up against the sky. It is certainly a very imposing object, and suitably placed at the gate of the great centre of commerce in the neighbouring Republic: but it has one defect, as seen at a distance at least. The head of the colossal figure, which should be grandly poised, is diminutive and wanting in prominence from the point of view from which I saw the statue in the dusk of evening. The details of the figure could not be made out. Perhaps on approaching it more nearly, this defect would disappear. Still, in such a statue, the outline however distant should be clear and well proportioned.

Our pilot left us at Sandy Hook, and we were now rapidly running out to sea with a north wind helping us on our way, blowing a little fresh, when five bells struck and we descended the companion way to dinner. An opportunity was thus afforded us to meet the rest of the passengers, and of speculating as to how many of us would be likely to assemble so comfortable in a day or so. I could not but shrewdly suspect that I, for one, should not have the pleasure of counting the absentees.

Meanwhile all were in excellent spirits, or made a show of being so, as we took our allotted places around the well provided table.

Supporting the Captain on his right was the Honorary Commissioner, representing Canada at the Exhibition, Mr. Adam Brown, M. P., massive, genial, and enthusiastic in everything relating to Canada and his mission, a most cheerful and enjoyable companion throughout the voyage, and to whom I shall ever feel indebted for much kind attention under a variety of circumstances.

Sitting next to him myself, our vis-a-vis consisted of a very talented young gentleman from Guelph who had made several trips to the islands in connection with insurance, and who contributed a series of able papers to the Canadian press on the occasion of our visit to Jamaica; and a gentleman returning to British Honduras, the president of an English company possessing some sixty thousand acres, of its richest lands, and

carrying on extensive operations in a variety of tropical products, a very tall young man of Yorkshire growth, talented in business, and abounding in wit, for many a joke made he, practical and otherwise, whom to equal in a war of words was a supreme test of ingenuity.

I leave the description of the other passengers for the moment to get on deck and breathe the fresh air, as the steamer has a suspicious motion rather discomposing to my feelings. The seas are moderate. There are white caps, of course, which can be seen through the darkness, but nothing resembling the heavy Atlantic rollers I have met while crossing to England. Indeed during the whole voyage, except when the wind lay across our bows, the vessel rolled but little, and there was nothing more exciting or stormy than a fitful squall or two, which would not last more than ten minutes, and the sun would again shine out in all its wonted brightness.

The wind was mostly from the north, keeping the temperature quite cool till we had swung past Cape Hatten, a usually stormy and foggy point to weather, and we were off the coast of Florida before I had to change part of the winter clothing in which I had left the frozen Northland.

For days we were out of sight of land, and the first met with was one of the Bahamas, Watling Island, near San Salvador, which was the first land touched by Columbus. But even this was passed in the darkness and the bright light that serves to guide the seaman was the only indication that we were in close proximity to such an interesting spot.

Reverting again to my fellow passengers we have a gentleman on his way to Georgetown, Central America, where he is the possessor of an island on which he grows cocoanuts, and buys many more in the surrounding country, shipping them to New York, a million and a half a season. Like our rollicking Honduras friend he describes the climate as moist and malarious, and even worse than that of Belize.

Then we have a sick man from Jamaica who is returning home from New York. He had contrived to be robbed in a boarding house there, and naturally enough believes all New Yorkers to be thieves and swindlers, the personification of every form of wickedness. One could not but sympathize with him in his mishap.

Then we had two Yankee quack doctors travelling with their nostrums to the sunny isles, in the prospect of making large sales to the negroes, with a troupe of minstrels to draw a crowd and lure them to the bait. Their stock company consisted of two young Mexicans who played on the guitar and the mandolin, and who played well too. They spoke English fluently, were small in stature with the color of the mulatto, but with none of the negro features, theirs being clear cut and sharp. A third performer was an Irish lad from New York with songs and an abundance of mother wit of the coarse and vulgar type.

The doctors told me they had forty-three medical men with as many humorous troupes vending their remedies, in almost every corner of the globe, and a factory at New Haven, Connecticut.

Another passenger was a reverend coloured gentleman of the Church of England returning to his home in Jamaica with his coloured wife, the only lady on board. Every feature of the minister was good and pleasing. He was a fluent talker and very intelligent. From him I learned much that was interesting concerning the island and its inhabitants. He was also a Government school teacher, and was returning to Jamaica from Belize, whither he had gone on a trip for his health.

In one of my talks with him he told me he was the son of a Major-General who was Governor of Belize sixty years ago.