

them with the high-mettled, if sometimes broken-kneed brutes whose turn it now was to show their paces, manifesting their impatience to be off and at it by champing their bits and pawing the ground—scarcely to be held in by the hostlers till Jehu mounted the box. Sometimes he never left his seat at all, but oftener he would make a bee line for the bar and swallow a half-mutchkin of whiskey to keep his courage up. No sooner had he a hold of ribbons, than the leaders began their capers, prancing from side to side in a way that made the outsiders imagine that everything was going to smash. But a few well aimed cuts of the whip soon brought them to their senses and away they went with a will, urged to utmost speed by the lash as well as by the shouts and rattle proceeding from the opposition coach in its frantic efforts to give the other the go-by. Whiles they might be running neck-and-neck, the vehicles swaying dangerously from side to side—the passengers meanwhile clinging to the rails and to each other for dear life. “Spills” were not unfrequent, caused by an axletree breaking or other derangement, but the number of fatal accidents was uncommonly rare. The coaches were all named by high-sounding titles—such as the “High flyer,” “Defiance,” “Red Rover,” “Blücher,” or the “Telegraph” to indicate lightning speed, and attract attention to this line or that.

The canal-boat of that time should be held in everlasting remembrance since it contained the germ of the iron and steel ships that were to follow. I do not know when the first iron boats came into use on this canal, but they were in full swing in 1834. They were constructed of very thin sheets of iron. They were long and narrow with sharp bows and clear runs, housed over like gondolas neatly furnished and upholstered and fitted comfortably for 40 or 50 passengers, and were drawn by three horses with mounted postillions in jockey costume, who urged on the horses for all they were worth. The boats cut the water like a knife and left a swish of wavelets behind them. On a straight stretch of the canal they made good time, say about eight miles an hour; but much time was lost in locking. Beginning with lock No. 22 at the ‘summit.’ There were eight or ten locks in succes-