

of these ships, which, as they are displayed in the passenger-agency windows, so captivated our boyish eyes. But as the vast machine lay quietly in the river, I was, indeed, very much impressed with her size, her neatness, the order that everywhere prevailed; in fact, the general preparedness for emergencies, should they arise. Said I to myself, with all my inexperience, "That man must indeed be a coward who would have any fears of the sea after contemplating such a grand and perfect piece of mechanism as this is."

I had heard, too, that the sea was sometimes "as smooth as a mirror;" wished that the greater part of the voyage might be over such a sea, and that just by way of variety I might have the opportunity of seeing and experiencing generally something of a good average storm for about two hours. For being, as you remember, all my life, Sammy, of a sceptical turn, I was disposed "to prove all things" for myself; and, as usual in this life, I found things are not as they seem on the pictures, nor even as we "read about," as you will learn later.

At Quebec a fair number of passengers embarked. It was the month of September; the weather was delightful. Precisely at 12 o'clock noon, the captain, on the bridge (I like to see the officers on that bridge), gave his orders to have the ship put under way. Slowly she swung around into the current; her engines gradually got into that steady motion which they had to maintain with unerring accuracy for a long week. The river was smooth, the sun bright; scores of beaming faces were seen on deck; all classes represented; and when the vast combination of apparatus worked harmoniously—all comprehended in the term 'ship'—we heard the words "Fire the gun!" It was fired, and produced that decided impression that we were really off for Old England, and

no mistake about it. Then came a brief interval in which everyone seemed emphatically to attend to his own business. The steerage passengers lugged their goods "down below," and stored them as they thought best for use during the voyage; the "intermediates" tried each to get the best berth for himself with a quiet and polite selfishness, or, if that be too strong a term, self-interest, that rather amused me; while the cabin passengers looked out that things aboard ship corresponded with the representations of agents on land. After this bustle was over, we all appeared on deck again to admire the scenery of our truly noble river. Every face was radiant with happiness, and the scene was one never to be forgotten by me—all the more as I had never had a similar experience. My eyes feasted on the unrivalled autumnal hues of our forests; and this picture was impressed so on my retina, that amid the dreary fogs of the London winter it recurred to me with a cheering comfort, Sammy, I cannot describe to you. With a short stop at Rimouski to take on the mails—so brief, indeed, that the sound of the machinery did not seem to leave my ears—we did not cease to "plough the watery waste," as you remember old Homer puts it—(Ah! Sammy, we can't improve very much on that old Greek, in descriptions of nature, at least, can we?)—till we cast anchor in the harbour of Moville, and the little Irish that was in me was melted up into my general composition as I beheld Ireland for the first time in the early morn, a country as interesting as it has ever been unfortunate and unhappy. But I know you will be inquiring even before this as to my companions, and how we spent our time at sea. In a word, we were a "motley crowd," and spent our time as best we could. But in a little more detail. Among the steerage passengers, with many of whom I had con-