

CHAPTER XXII

A LAND OF UPPER BERTHS

THERE are times when a man can be very dense. During the past year I have crossed the continent twice — stood by the “wine-dark” Pacific and mused by “the salt, unplumbed, estranging” Atlantic — and all through the journey, both going and coming, a piece of news that will interest all travellers was “tickling my consciousness with the tip of its tail.” But not until my last day’s travel did I make the discovery that aroused both amusement and wrath. The story of it will now be told for the first time because it will do as well as anything else to show a kind of international tie that binds more securely than the arrangements effected through diplomatic channels. Business takes no heed of boundaries that are defined for patriotic reasons. It recognizes them only when they can be used