

The Atlantic Ferry

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United States. On no part of the ocean is there so much traffic as on the North Atlantic, the great "ferry" between the Old World and the New, and even before the coming of steamships many passengers dared the stormy crossing in order to make a home in the New World or to revisit friends in the Old.

The width of the Atlantic averages about 3,000 miles, a long voyage in the days of which we speak. The *Mayflower*, with the first shipload of English immigrants on board, took more than three months—106 days, to be exact—on her passage. This was longer even than the voyage of Columbus,



THE "BRITANNIA" (1840) AND A MODERN LINER.

who made his crossing within ten weeks. In the best days of sailing-ships three weeks was reckoned a quick passage, and double that time was not uncommon.

The introduction of steam-power soon made the Atlantic crossing a less formidable undertaking for passengers. In 1840 the *Britannia* crossed from Liverpool to Boston in fifteen days; sixty years later the time taken by the "greyhounds of the Atlantic" was only a little over five days. As the time has been reduced, the comforts of passengers have been better cared for in other ways. The size of the ship is the most important point for comfort in travel, and the steamships which are used on the Atlantic are by far the largest in the