

dykes and red tiled houses began to close in around us, and we steamed slowly into the Scheldt, gazing delightedly at the strange, quaint land, the tiny churches and forts, the solemn peasants, who waved their hands and hats to us from the walls, the forest of masts, seemingly growing out of the fields inland, but really snugly anchored in some hidden inlet behind the green walls of the Hollandish breastworks, a strange and charming picture to American eyes, and when the Sabbath evening closed in moonless and dark, we gathered for the last time in the saloon for one more chat, the inevitable autograph album made its last appeal for contributions, addresses were noted down, plans were discussed and matured, two by two, sundry young couples disappeared up the companion way for a last walk round the deck, lent books were inquired for, wine bills were paid, fees began to lie heavy in the steward's pockets, and over all was the bustle and unrest that spoke of to-morrow's fitting. I think one can hardly regret leaving the steamer at the end of the outward passage, especially when one is landing on the continent for the first time, though I have been sorry enough when the hours grew few on the homeward trip, for it is then the last link in the happy chain of adventure and novelty and interest, and the very risk and uncertainty of the sea defers that tame flattening out which is inevitable to nine out of ten tourists at the end of their journey.

"Speak well of the ship that carries you safely," said one of the officers to me, when a word of delight at landing caught his ear. And so will I. The Noordland is clean and airy, and well equipped; her officers are real sailors, her servants attentive and willing. She goes cannily and carefully, and, though she doesn't own a record for speed, she "gets there just the same," as the boys say, and she is *very* steady. Under certain circumstances the fast boats are a blessing, but for one who is fond of the sea, can "go with the ship," and can spare the time, it's a thousand fold pleasanter to go on a good, well equipped, roomy vessel, that takes twelve days from shore to shore, than to be whisked across by an over-heated, over-crowded, double-engined "Greyhound" in little more than half that time. On those fine fast boats, with their crowds of passengers, one has not the solid comfort nor the time to make much fun. It is generally three or four days before one knows one's neighbors, and I was nearly a week on a steamer once before I exchanged a word with the nicest and the firmest of my friends in the days that followed. Then, the servants are over-worked, and one must fee liberally for