

photograph. As the passengers poured down the slanting gangway, all bearing the unmistakable air and stamp of superiority that marks those who have just left the sacred soil of England, he scanned the faces with an eye of keen regard. To his surprise he saw the gentlemen he had marked respectively as Mr. Howells and the publisher greet people who had not the slightest resemblance to the poet, and go with them to the customs alcoves. Traveller after traveller hurried past him, followed by stewards carrying luggage; gradually the flow of people thinned, and then stopped altogether, save for one or two invalids who were being helped down the incline by nurses. And still no sign of Finsbury Verne.

Suddenly a thought struck him. Was it possible that—the second class? His eye brightened and he hurried to the gangway, fifty yards farther down the pier, where the second-cabin passengers were disembarking.

There were more of the latter, and the passageway was still thronged. Just as Stockton reached the foot of the plank a little man in green ulster and deerstalker cap, followed by a plump little woman and four children in single file, each holding fast to the one in front like Alpine climbers, came down the narrow bridge, taking almost ludicrous care not to slip on the cleated boards.