

chairman. Then we had bets on the rate of speed each day, on the hour we should land, on the number of the pilot boat, even which foot the pilot would first put on the ladder, when he came to pilot us safely into the muddy Scheldt.

We crowded to the side to look at his burly figure, clad in a great nor-wester and long boots, and watched with interest until he began to climb like a great sprawling beetle up the rope ladder that hung alongside.

I found it very interesting to have so many different new people about me (I mean foreign people) as are on these Belgian steamers. We have a Belgian stewardess, a Danish bed steward, a Flemish night watch, English and German table stewards, a Scotch head steward, and our captain is from Heligoland, one of those great muscular descendants of the ancient sea kings, who are only happy on the bosom of their mother ocean; don't understand the idea of a "mother Earth," and in short look with calm and happy superiority on the whole great multitude of "land-lubbers." A little painting of a pretty child hangs over the big sea captain's berth, and I am told of how the loud roar of this old sea lion sinks to gentlest whisper when he speaks of that little maid, now singing her baby songs in Paradise.

For her sweet memory, perhaps, he is so kind and tender with one of our party, a bonny boy of two years, or perhaps it is the sailor spirit in him, that charming patience and goodness to all children and animals which shows the best traits of Jack's many sided and bewildering character.

From whatever gracious spring his goodness flows, our captain encircles us all with it, and nothing delights him more than to see our pranks, and, I must confess, incite us by word and deed to further mischief. His face was as long as to-morrow, and his voice as stern as the day after, when he heard about somebody putting a long string of taffy, sticky and sweet, in the priest's bed; and he said such things must never occur again, or no more candy pulls would be allowed; but some of us saw the irrepressible smile steal over his weather-beaten face whenever he met the meek and long-coated priest for days afterwards, and the school boys who had played the prank breathed more freely, and sought for fresh mischief to do.

It was after a long dreamy Sunday, that, just as the sun was setting, the long