

centre of the earth," and he ventured to remark that nobody had ever seen the Equator.

Miss Holland felt her conversational conquest complete—"Well, anyhow, I have seen it," she said; and she gave an exact description of it. When she had finished, glowing with triumph, a younger guest asked her if her travels had given her also any experiences to relate about the inhabitants of Mars.—and some one briefly outlined how the flag was nailed to the North Pole. Then conversation took another turn—such is the skill of a tactful hostess.

But there was one thing Miss Holland had never suspected. Being chaperone to her young and pretty niece on her homeward voyage from South America, and being by nature much more efficient than tactful, she had not gained unlimited popularity. As she had come onto the boat deck one day the third officer was taking the mid-day sights with the second. The third officer noticed her first and he said to the second it was a bit of tough luck that a chap couldn't get five minutes to chat to the pretty niece without having everlastingly to entertain that superannuated old aunt as well. They

agreed and then, they concocted a wicked scheme—to "get their own back" as the second expressed it.

So they got out the big telescope from the chart-room; they fixed it in its bracket on the bridge; they focused it near the horizon and then what—they stretched a tiny piece of black thread across the inside of the lens.

Then they suddenly became animated about the big telescope. Miss Holland saw the animation. Woman's curiosity brought her to the bridge in defiance of the regulations that passengers shall not cross the white line, and she panted: "Tell me Mr. Mahoney, what can you see? May I look? Oh, let me look!"

Mr. Mahoney told Miss Holland they had just sighted the Equator; Miss Holland looked; the black thread did its duty nobly. Mr. Mahoney and his junior colleague rejoiced long and greatly that the "biter had been bit;" and as we have seen Miss Holland acquired a close acquaintance with that strange geographical phenomenon the world's Equator.

Mahoney is a chief officer now but he still lets out a bellow of merriment if anybody happens to remark, "that all things are not just what they seem."

