

dreaded Bay of Biscay being as smooth as a mill-pond. We stayed about eight hours in Gibraltar, just long enough to inspect the fortifications, with about 700 guns in position, from 100-ton guns down to 64-pounders; to visit the South Town and Europa point, the English part, the Almeida Gardens, where the troops parade and the bands play, and the more picturesque old town occupied chiefly by Moors and Spaniards. It was our first glimpse of Oriental life. We left in the evening for Marseilles, getting into a gale and cross sea on the Saturday—a gale which convinced us that the ship was not free from those ridiculous antics which vessels indulge in under such circumstances. The table that day was nearly deserted, and groans and lamentations were heard in the state rooms. The next morning, Sunday, the 15th inst., found us moored in the harbour of Marseilles, where we stayed the whole of Monday, going ashore each day. It is a very thriving port, and having visited it several times before I was able to judge of the great advance it has made from a commercial point of view. Drives round the town, to the Prado Château d'If, fortifications, &c., fairly took up our time the two days, sailing again at six p.m. for Naples. The next day was fine, and the weather continued so until we reached Naples, on Wednesday, at eight a.m. Most of the passengers landed, some to ascend Vesuvius, others to visit Pompeii and Herculaneum; yet others preferred the quaint old lanes and streets of the old town and the Museum. I spent a considerable time in the room where the Pompeiian relics are kept, and, under the guidance of the curator, had a close inspection of the principal objects. I was struck with a case of passes for a theatre, and felt how true it is that there is nothing new under the sun, for the free passes were represented by skeleton heads carved in bone—and our free visitors to theatres, I need not remind your readers, are known as "deadheads." I have been several times in Naples, but have never seen a flame issuing from Vesuvius—only a column of smoke by day and nothing by night; and so it was this time. In the evening we sailed for Port Said, and early next morning entered the Straits of Messina. Here the sea was smooth, and we had a good view of Messina. Towards noon we cleared the island of Sicily and came into another gale which lasted the remainder of that day and until the next night. How we rolled and pitched! It was very cold. Again the tables were deserted and the stewards had a pretty good time of it in the various cabins.

On Sunday last we entered Port Said at eight a.m., and left