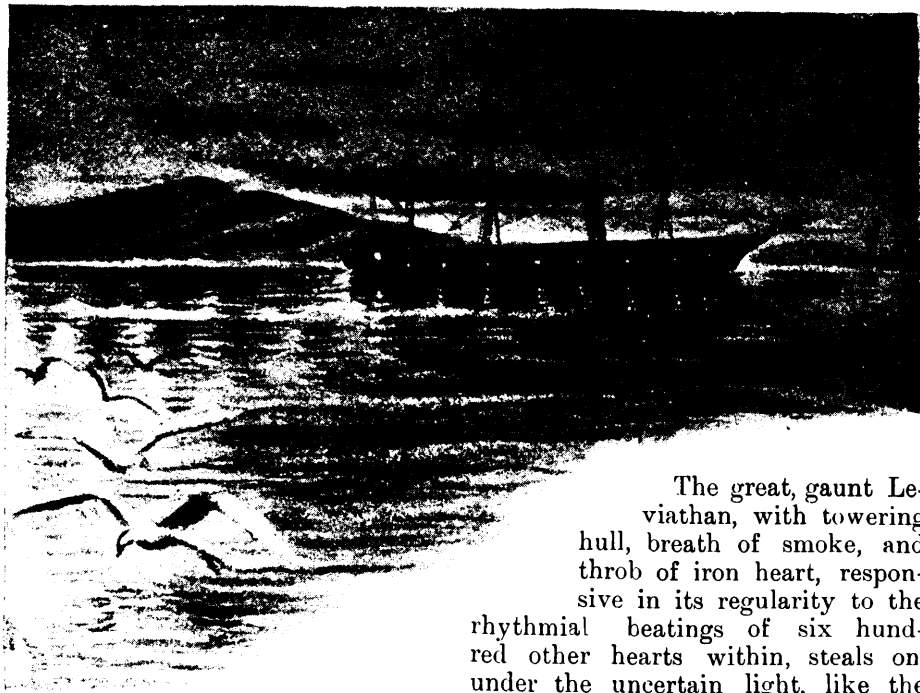


VIGNETTES FROM ST. PILGRIM'S ISLE.

BY A. H. MORRISON.

(With Illustrations by the Author.)



I.

NIGHT.

"And this was in the night, most glorious night!"
—Byron..

THE night is stooping above the headlands of Arran and Cantire, and the grey veil of the gloaming has already been dropped over the distance beyond—the magical distance which holds within its potential womb the, as yet, but dimly outlined shores of that

"—Caledonia, stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child;
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood."

sung of by Scott, and loved and admired by all who have had the privilege to be associated with the land of the tartan and the heather.

The great, gaunt Leviathan, with towering hull, breath of smoke, and throb of iron heart, responsive in its regularity to the rhythmical beatings of six hundred other hearts within, steals on, under the uncertain light, like the spectral monster of a dream, past headland and islet, bluff and cape, encountering, ever and anon, some fellow-spectre, huge or diminutive, that, with flaring eye and sepulchral voice, glides by into the murk and mist we have left. Their heads are to the sea, the unquiet vast of heaving waters and uncertain morrows, but ours points to the nearing shore, homeward, where waits for many no such uncertain destiny, but blazing hearth and cheery welcome of home, sweet home!

We stand on the upper deck long after the usual hour for retiring, and muse of many things. 'Tis our last night on board, and to-morrow we part, this frame of iron and fume, these frames of flesh and spirit.

The great messenger which has borne