

against infidelity. I pointed out that it might be very interesting to hear the opinions of this learned minister and that, but that after all, this is not what we really require. We need a true and powerful declaration: "Thus saith the Lord!" not an "I think," or, "I believe." I further lead him to meditate upon the existence of man before the foundations of the world were laid, our mission on this globe, and the promise of eternal salvation in worlds to come. In these subjects he exhibited much interest, and when we parted, he promised to write to me as soon as possible. I have no doubt he was an honest Christian, and I hope he will become more enlightened in the truths as they are in Christ Jesus.

The whole passage from Italy to Egypt was, as far as the weather was concerned, one fine pleasure trip. The sea was as calm as a good conscience all the way; the sun shone brightly every day, so that the canvas had to be spread on deck in order to give shade. The moon and the stars threw their silver rays all around us during the night, and methinks I never saw so clear a moon or such bright stars before as on this azure sky. My heart swelled with joy as I stood on the deck and admired God's vast and beautiful creation. I thought I could understand a little the feelings of the royal poet of old who, charmed by the beauty of God's creation, burst out, admonishing everything that had existence to "Sing praise unto the Lord." To his musical ear the weak harmony from the strings of his harp must have grown insignificant, and he wanted to hear a volume of sounds from this immense workmanship of God, which in its harmony of motion and beauty is so unfathomable and so perfect. The lovely weather just referred to was the more remarkable as the ship had had a rough time of it two days before reaching Genoa. But it seems it is always my good fortune to have fine weather on the sea. I have crossed the North Sea seven times; I have sailed many a voyage over the Baltic; I have passed through Cattegat and Skagerrak, sailing along the Norwegian coast to many degrees north of the Arctic circle, where the midnight sun plays with the large whales and the seals; I have crossed the Atlantic twice and now the Mediterranean, but I have never seen what may be termed really bad weather at sea. I think I have experienced far worse on land. I have therefore been so well accustomed to pleasant weather when on the water that any other kind would almost be a surprise to me.

We left Genoa at ten o'clock p. m. on January 7th. Next morning, at eight o'clock, I was on deck and found that we could still see land on both sides. On our right hand were the rocky shores of Corsica, and on our left the little Island of Elba. Once in a while other islands came in sight and again vanished. About seven o'clock a. m. on January 9th we passed Vesuvius, near enough to see a vast column of smoke hovering over it. In the afternoon of the same day we passed the volcano Strom-

boli, very close by. This is the most northern of the Liparian islands, and has a height of 920 metres. Its crater is always throwing out smoke and, with few intervals, streams of lava were seen running down its sides into the sea. Yet the island is inhabited. I counted about fifty houses grouped around an old church on its west coast, and on the opposite coast appeared to be a considerable city. The vegetation as seen from the ship seemed scanty. Another volcano was visible on the right hand, but far off. An old Irishman, after having looked at the volcano for some time, came up to me and said: "Now, sor, oi've never heard it explained, but if this is not the entrance to hell, oi should loike to know where it is? Jist fancy a great, big fire in the middle of the wather, and no wood nor no coal to feed it. Who could do that but the 'Ould' un' hisself?" I could not help smiling at this short but novel expression of opinion; yet, the gentleman might not have been so very far from the truth after all. Who knows?

In a little while, having passed the Liparian Islands, the coast of Calabria on the left and of Sicily on the right came in view; and in the evening we passed through the strait of Messina, which on its narrowest passage is not more than four kilometres wide. The sun had already set when we passed through this strait, but in the magical light of the moon a wonderful panorama was unfolded to our sight. To the left we could distinguish the little town of Scylla, the Scyllæum of old, built on the slopes of the rock with the same name which the phantasy of ancient mariners thought to be the dwelling-place of that fearful sea-monster, Scylla, the destroyer of all ships that came within its reach. Behind Scylla, Aspromonte, a mountain 1964 meters high and known from the attack of the Italians on that noble hero Garibaldi August 27th, 1862, lifts its head towards the sky. To the right the beautiful coast landscape of Sicily presented itself, illuminated with the hundreds of gas-lights of Messina and other towns, which seen from the ship were truly "wunderschon," as my German friends declare. From the strait of Messina our course lay more eastward, and during the night we came out into the open sea.

A comparison between the German steamers on these waters and the Guion Line of the Atlantic will fall very much in favor of the former. On the German boats everybody is kind and polite to the passengers, from the first officer to the waiter. The captain did not think it below his dignity to wish his passengers on board a "good morning," nor to converse with them and give them every reasonable information. Everything was done for the comfort of the passengers. On the English steamer the officers looked as dignified as Chinese Mandarins, and I do not believe they exchanged a word with the passengers during a whole week. Everybody, down to the stewards, tried to "look big," and the passengers were treated as

a necessary evil hardly to be endured. On the English steamer everything was done for the convenience of the crew, not for the passengers who paid their money. The fare in the second cabin of the German steamer was as good as that in the first cabin of the *Alaska*. If any of my fellow-sufferers should happen to see these lines, they will agree with me in lauding the German arrangements. Our bill of fare was varied: One day's dinner consisted of soup, fish, roast beef, chicken, pudding, fruit, besides vegetables, butter, cheese, sausages, anchovies, etc., which were always on the table; and everything was well done and served to us in a way that what was good in itself was made to taste still better. I wish I could have said the same of the *Alaska*. But I cannot. What was given us in the second cabin there was not good, nor was there enough of it, unless one kept on applying for "more"—a request which was very reluctantly complied with. I remember one day I asked a gentleman on the *Alaska* what was the bill of fare for the day, and he said: "Adobes, sole leather and conglomerated paste!" In common English this is translated: "Bread, roast beef and pudding;" but I confess that I hardly know which of these two versions of the bill of fare was the more appropriate. To substantiate what I here say against the *Alaska*, I will mention only one item out of many that have not left my memory. We were served with liver several times. Now, the liver is a very useful member of the body, but its functions when alive ought to entitle it to a quiet rest when dead. It is not very fit for food under any condition; but this particular liver, so I was informed, had been bought in Liverpool, carried across the Atlantic once, and was still served to us, on nearing Liverpool again! From this may be judged the kind of food in general on the *Alaska*, and, besides, when thrown at the passengers as if they were a set of hungry dogs instead of a company of tourists, I think it is too much for human patience to endure. The *Guion* line would do well to send some of their officers and stewards (particularly the latter) abroad in order to learn *mores*; and Germany may be recommended as a splendid place to go to for that purpose. The trip on the *Alaska* was quite "a job," and we were glad when it was over. The trip in the *Hohenstaufen* was in every sense a pleasure, and one felt sorry when the time to leave it had arrived. It was a parting with friends. It may be necessary to state that the writer is neither an Englishman nor a German, and therefore has no prejudice in favor of the Germans. On the contrary, if he has any prejudice at all it would be in favor of the English. But he is simply recording facts; and I know that anyone who has to go this way will agree with me when he has made a comparison of the two lines of steamers. *Auf Wiedersehen.*

J. M. S.

THE SHIP "HOHENSTAUFEN," on the Mediterranean, Jan. 12, 1889.