

WAKEMAN'S WANDERINGS.

LONDON, Dec. 19, 1892.—I pray all of you who are to follow after in European jaunts never to cross the English channel between Dover and Calais save by day. It has always been my grewsome fortune to make the passage by night and in storm.

It is pleasant surely from the time our train leaves the grim London house-tops, all the way in the evening gloaming through the lovely shire of Kent; but the roar of the sea is always louder upon the great stone quays than the din of our fast night mail, as we rush in upon quaint old Dover town.

A moment at the station, and then we creep along the docks and come along side the royal mail steamer, hustled out of our wheeled, half lighted cells and driven like unwilling cattle down the slippery descent and up over the gangway which seesaws with desperate suggestions of danger, and are finally hauled aboard the rocking craft like the faint-hearted land-lubbers we are.

"First class aft! second class for'd!"

Sorting us like sheep, we are at last huddled aboard the "foam"—most appropriate name, for even here at the docks the sea is so wild that its spume is dashed over us; the luggage and continental mail are somehow taken on; and, with a great lurch from which the steel ribbed though diminutive and shell-like craft only recovers to be hurled violently in another direction, our steamer fairly began its *ricocheting* across the channel.

Behind us, nestled in one of the most charming ravines in all England, is ancient Dover town, with its lights, winding away to the westward and blinking from the sides of the cliff; while the great Dover light-house flames out upon the channel and brings into weird outlines the stupendous castellated fortifications upon mighty Dover Heights.

You are instantly plunged into the plain, old fashioned misery of sea-sickness. You do not go in-doors, for all those nice people who must be quite as used to a channel boat as a ferry would surely notice you were becoming ill. On the other hand, all the terrors of the deep and of approaching physical helplessness are resultant from your enforced acrobatic feats upon deck.

Between humiliation and possible death, in sheer desperation you choose disgrace. Your hand is upon the cabin-door but seems palsied. No, you will seek the second-class cabin, "for'd." They will be less critical there. Its door is but fifty feet away; but where is braver pilgrimage than this? It seems an age until you have been able to throw yourself down the winding stairway into the strange triangular cabin below.

Ugh!—the odor of the place, its subtle dread and subtler qualms will always possess you whenever your crossing of the English channel returns as a hateful blot upon your memory.

Under the stairway, from behind a crescent-shaped bar, two Tom Thumb like tiny old boys, attired like men-of-war's men, are dispensing liquors and ales at a lively rate. Every male in the cabin is smoking, some at the same time munching food at the sloppy lunch table, where the dishes click and slip with a greasy grind with the lurching of the vessel. Through the noxious vapors, and as if far away and in an

oppressive dream, you see, at either side of the cabin and in tiers, each beyond and slightly higher than another, in amphitheatre form of arrangement, capacious bunks. Each is provided with a leather-encased cushion, a serge-covered pillow and a sunken cuspidore; and nearly all of these bunks are occupied by men and women in every imaginable attitude of human suffering, or of preparation against torturing experience.

Over there is a party of Americans, evidently an entire family. They are cursing everything outside of America, and struggling with each other as their physical convulsions increase. Beyond are several friars in brown and gray, perhaps from some of the French cloisters beyond Amiens, sober and grave in their rough habit and cowls, bearing their misery with wonderful fortitude. Opposite are stolid commercial travelers, silent Jews, and Frenchmen full of antics in their torture, with Frenchwomen, graceful and pretty even in this remorselessly leveling of all human ills, an English channel sea-sickness.

The horrible air and scenes of this cabin force you with others back upon deck, where the steamer's rail at one side catches you in its banging grip to hurl you to the iron netting embrace of the other. There is no escape. All bravery, resolution and supreme will power are of no avail. You recall in an ecstasy of hopelessness that no channel steamer was ever lost. With this thought all possibility of relief is abandoned. For a good hour every aspiration and ambition of life is swept away. You grovel and slide and slop as limp as a strand of cold macaroni upon the night mail steamer's deck; for utter exhaustion has come.

But at last the bracing storm which has whipped the channel into foam pounds new life into you. The salt spray dashes into your face and revives you. You crawl to where the four grim wheelmen are, for in the cutting wind there is a faint odor of the land. The chief wheelman comforts you with,

"Doan't mind it, mon. The best there be doan't be able to stand on their legs hereabout!"

Away to the right is now seen the light at the French cape of Griz Nez. Soon your steamer begins skirting the coast. Here and there are glintings and glimmerings of light from the coast-wise villages, where the late revel or vigil is being kept. The pier-head light at Calais grows and glows. Over the looming quay where the sea plays mad havoc is a continuous wreathing of flashing phosphorescence. Speedily now your steamer literally gallops into port.

Here at one side are the fantastic fishing-craft and the belling "lighters." As the other, as the bedraggled passenger crowd to the gangway opening, and rows of French porters, bowing and scraping and chattering glibly. The weird cressets flare over the picture strangely; and a flavor of decaying, salt-things, of half-digested Cognac and of penetrating garlic is over all.

And what a din is there!

With a swash and a bump the "Storm" is finally made fast. Then the perilous midnight ascent to the docks, the keen-eyed customs officers, the skirmishes and more serious engagements with porters, the cries of the guards, the miserable entanglements and wild-eyed sorties, and finally, the

mad haste to the different trains for Paris, for Vienna and for Berlin. In half an hour everything has come to rights; you have with a hundred "*pardons*," and "*remercies*!" been hustled into one carriage only to be hustled out of this into another; and at last you are locked tightly within one which has got you safely for a little time.

Then, certain of still being all wrong, the train moves away from the docks—weaving and swaying past where red-shirted French boys play through long summer days on golden sands; past frowning battlements; past quaint old rookeries of the seaport town; underneath the shadows of the great Calais lighthouse; past out-jutting roofs and underneath overreaching balconies and hood-like arches; until at last, with a bump that brings you to your feet, you are within another raging din where trains are made up for all parts of the continent.

Here porters with blue blouses and red-rimmed caps, guards with gold lace and itching palms and *gens d'armes* with bow legs and Quixotic stateliness, again hustle you; tear your tickets from you; throw your baggage after you; commiserate you; wheedle you; take your *pourboire* and hurl you, as from a catapult, into a carriage compartment, where, sick in body and demented in mind, you sink exhausted into perturbed sleep as the hour of one is tolled from the ghostly towers of the Calais churches; haunted by dreams of Brobdingnagian, gaudily dressed guards continuing infinite tortures through compartment windows, supplemented by invisible choruses of

"*Je vous remercie!*"—
"*Pardonnez moi!*"—

fitted to the staccato of the wheels upon the rails, ever after carried in the memory like some infernal realization of a witch-wailed Walpurgis Night.

There is a great distinction between British "tipping" and American "tipping" in Great Britain. Your true Briton "tips" with something like unconscious kindness. We Americans who travel in Europe bestow our gratuities largely, loosely, loudly, as though we were either defying criticism or resenting petty brigandage.

Quite as striking a difference will be found in the disposition of all British serving people in their acceptance of "tips" from Briton or foreigner. They often seem bullies to us, because our manner arouses their antagonism or cupidity, or both. But they are veritable lambs to their own folk, and the Englishman, who is the greatest of travelers in his own country, will leave a shining trail of gratitude and good will behind him by the judicious use of copper only, when we perforce follow in perturbation and discomfort though we spangle our way with silver.

I have seen the English side of this fact illustrated on countless occasions. Only recently while waiting for a London train at the great Rugby station, a handsome, portly, venerable gentleman alighted from the carriage of a train from Coventry. A porter hastened to his assistance and conducted him to a comfortable seat next the door where I stood. Then he struggled with the luggage. There were altogether sixteen parcels. Four were huge leather handbags, each of the size and weight of a marketable Limerick pig. They were