

A TRIP ON THE SHADY SIDE

Observations Made During a Journey to New York.

SIGHTS ON AND FROM THE BOAT

Tender Sentiments Encouraged While Drifting on the Bosom of the Deep—How the Letters of George and Charlie are Discussed on the Water.

Shall it be a story of a trip on the Shady Side to the metropolis?

It was my privilege, good fortune or what not, to accept an invitation to a ride on the waters of Long Island Sound. A ride on the Mississippi, down the Ohio, and other Western streams, in earlier days, was always a treat, and doubly interesting because of the nearness one is kept to the banks on either side, and the changing views ever coming at the crooked turns of the river. Never have I crossed the ocean spanning the continents. America has ever been large enough, gorgeous and grand in all that appeals to sense, and deep and wide in every scope of study pertaining to art and nature's classic beauty. So when I stepped upon the Shady Side, burdened by no thought of care, receptive of anticipated pleasure, eyes and ears on the qui vive to take in all that opens to the senses, it may be admitted I was altogether dumb and quite as the Emerald man said, "entirely spachless."

At the side of the boat stood a great scow, dipping its iron bucket into the mud, taking out great handfuls of earth, dropping it high over the bank. A funny contrivance, for all the world like a big hand, with open fingers grasping into the muddy bottom. A Yankee affair, no doubt, for who but a Connecticut Yankee has time to spare, and brains to construct such a thing of that kind? But hold! a toot and a tinkling bell, and the boat was off, out past the islands and on the channel's course to the open Sound. There was just enough of flirtation left since girlhood days, to wave a good-by to the lighthouse man, and distance enough between us to safely say: "Will see you again when we return?"

All Appliances for Safety.

About the first thought that seemed to engage the mind was, How about the life-preservers? Are they all in working order, and handy to get at? For the swell of ocean emphasized the fact that the best of boats, and the most skillful crew, sometimes fail to pull through the gusty deep. Up above were small boats for safety, and ropes and things enough, it seemed, for all practical purposes. The captain's face seemed all sufficient to allay the faintest approach to danger. A man of pleasant countenance, and one to guide a vessel out of harm's way. The mate, too, had a jolly broadness, touched by a sympathetic readiness to do whatever the emergency might demand. And the crew appeared to be men of ropes qualified to "do up a knot," not so much missterially, perhaps, as nautically considered.

All danger tided over as to going down, there came that quietude that follows a storm, "a great calm."

Gushing Girl Graduates.

Quite near, too near, sat two lovely-looking girls, and they talked a perfect stream of gush. Better had the key of their conversation been pitched at a lower scale, for they said things out loud, that any but a woman of sober years might have borne with better toleration. Reading love-letters before the public and reciting little pieces of "O Mys," and "Did you evers?" Girls, too, just from the school classes of graduation. In all sober meditation, I listened, with high respect to the wrought essays delivered at the closing exercises of that day—pen elaborations upon subjects bearing a high distinction, forecasting the pathway of life's high ideals. And to meet so soon this self-same scion "pit-a-patting" with George's and Charlie's tender missives! It was too shocking for anybody.

But really did the subduing influences of a bright day, the abstract situation of drifting along on the water's bosom, away from land holdings, the mollifying aptitude to let go on sober, serious imagery, and falling to the snare of the sensuous, overpower the senses for the time being? If so, the girls have my forgiveness. But, dear me! Do it all on a lower tone, if even no other but women-folk are near by, not to say anything about the "ships that pass in the night." There seemed enough of them going and coming in the day-time to busy one's mind with all sorts of wonderment.

Thoughts of Jonah.

When the son of Amittai was told to go to Nineveh, that great city, it seems he didn't like the job, and sought a ship for Tarshish. It was then the custom to pay fare before going on board. Had this rule prevailed on the Shady Side, there would have been no need to arouse the sleeper for this purpose, and the man might, as did Jonah, "go down into the sides of the ship, and fall to."

My host, the "the lady friend," enticed me to take a peep at the great engine which was boosting us along. It had a sliding way of coming up and down, and doing stunts with levers that looked very handsome indeed, but I didn't like the cranky motion it had of saying "swish," a voice that expressed a power of force behind it. It bespeaks a fire somewhere, and a boiler, and they tell me boilers go off like Fourth of July crackers sometimes. The poetry of motion, to my taste lay in the wild waves about us. Yet rather not to that fitful degree in which the skipper's daughter lashed to the mast cried:

"O, father, I hear the sound of guns!

O say, what may it be?
Some ship in distress that cannot live
In such an angry sea!"

But in that drifting, dreamful rise,
"Where swells and falls
The Bay's deep breast at intervals."

Passing in mid-Sound can be seen prominent buildings skirting the shore; landmarks which serve as ranges for the fishing banks. We were told fishermen have set-ranges by which they drop anchor, cast their lines into the runs where fish have feeding-places, a knowledge of which is guarded against from intruders, and, by this means, are enabled to catch the wary fishes, while rowing about just in

the near neighborhood, and wondering why the fish don't come his way.

On the White Beaches.

Here and there can be seen the white sand beaches the sea has formed by its angry moods to express it self when hurled back by the defiant rocks. Here, too,

"The fisher's child,
With tresses wild,
Unto the smooth, bright sand beguiled,
With glowing lips
Sings as she skips
Or gazes at the far-off ships."

It must be confessed that, under the combined influences drawn from the delights of a sail on the water, one is apt to fall into love-creating sentiments, else why should two beings sit in confidential nearness, wrapped in soulful ecstasy, so forgetful of surroundings as not to see themselves as "ithers," see them?

One can be almost lost in admiration of the Lord's great work in gathering the waters into one place, and commanding the tides to come and go, but never altogether transported into Elysian sublimity

Some Tender Thoughts.

This state of enrapture can come of nothing less than love, and of a kind that soonest yields to the noetic measure of a steamboat, since, in the percentage of observations, it has proven itself more in favor of this class of craft than any other. The couple can have my sympathy when the awakening takes place, and the true realization still finds them in the midst of a materialistic universe.

One of the deck hands, observing the same situation of things, dared a wink and smothered a smile, just enough to save himself from bold demeanor.

It is all, however, of the world's making. Go where one will, the senses cannot help but catch some shockful side as well as bather in the more supernal.

"What did the man say?" I asked, a little uncertain of the speech he uttered.

"He said we were nearing Hell Gate."
It were well the word was spoken out of the Nutmeg State, else the spokesman might have been charged with profanity.

The people of Stamford may permit dogs to roam at will, but never would they tolerate a thing so unaltruistic as an oath. It would seem to pass through the gates as mentioned above. The implication involves a descendancy, but herein, again, things are not what they seem. Expiatory acts, we are told, have in them a measure of redemption from this sort of misery. Our desire was to get back to Connecticut. We concluded not to reach it by water, and to regain it without passing through fire. So my host suggested the automobile, and to that we clung with heroic devotion.

Aunt Hannah.