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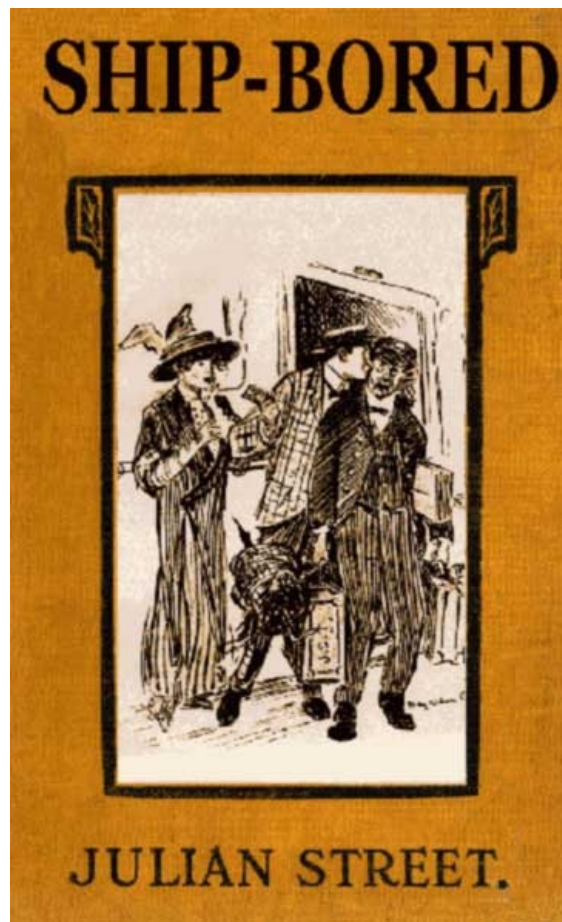
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SHIP-BORED

By The Same Author

THE NEED OF CHANGE.

Cloth. 50 cents net

PARIS À LA CARTE.

Cloth. 60 cents net

MY ENEMY—THE MOTOR.

Cloth. 50 cents net

SHIP-BORED

By

JULIAN STREET

AUTHOR OF "THE NEED OF CHANGE," ETC.

With Illustrations by

MAY WILSON PRESTON



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MCMXIV

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**TO
BOOTH TARKINGTON**



THE SPOTTER IS A "PERFECT DEAR," AND THAT IS HOW YOUR WIFE COMES TO LOSE TWELVE DRESSES AND A TWENTY-THOUSAND-DOLLAR NECKLACE AND HAVE HYSTERIC'S ON THE DOCK.
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"Ship-Bored" originally appeared in *Everybody's Magazine*.

PREFACE

Whatever the effect of "Ship-Bored" upon others, its publication has exerted a very definite effect upon me, or rather upon the character of my daily mail. Instead of letters the postman now leaves little packages containing pills which, according to the senders, will prevent the casting of bread upon the waters.

It is astonishing to learn how many sea-sick remedies there are. Looking at the bottles and the boxes piled, each morning by my breakfast plate, I sometimes wonder if there aren't as many remedies as sufferers.

But suppose there are? Why do people send the medicines to me? Why do perfect strangers assume that, because I have taken up the task of muck-raking the Atlantic Ocean, I am in need of antidotes for *mal de mer*? Even suppose that I do suffer thus at sea? Is it anybody else's business—or luncheon?

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All great literary works are born of suffering. Stop the suffering and you stop the author. Yet people keep on sending pills to me—each pill an added insult if you choose to take it that way.

But I don't take them that way. I don't take them at all. I try them on my friends. When a friend of mine is sailing I send him a few pills out of a recent bottle. If he reports that he was sea-sick I throw away the balance of the bottle. The same if he dies. That shows that the pills are too strong.

I do not wish to take undue credit to myself for conducting these experiments. Since the pills are given to me, my researches cost me nothing—excepting an occasional friend whom (as he was sailing for Europe, anyway) I should not be able to see, even if he were alive.

J. S.

NEW YORK, *January, 1912.*

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SHIP-BORED

When the cabin port-holes are dark and green
Because of the seas outside;
When the ship goes *wop* (with a wiggle between)
And the steward falls into the soup-tureen,
And the trunks begin to slide;
When Nursey lies on the floor in a heap,
And Mummy tells you to let her sleep,
And you aren't waked or washed or dressed,
Why, then you will know (if you haven't guessed)
You're "Fifty North and Forty West!"

—*Just-So Stories.*

"Now run, dear! That's the gangway! You take the baby, and I'll take the fitted bag! Yes, I have the sea-sick tablets; they're here in my pocket with the tickets and the letters of credit and the travellers' cheques and the baby's mittens and the trunk keys and the—Well, I don't care *who's* here to see us off! People ought to know better! Now hurry up! There goes the whistle!"

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It is an awful quarter of an hour, that quarter of an hour before the liner sails; that worrying, waving, whooping, whistling quarter of an hour through which you stand on deck like a human centre-piece loaded with candy, fruit, and flowers, surrounded by a phantasmagoria of friendly faces, talking like a dancing-man and feeling like a dancing dervish. Small wonder that the deafening whistle-blast and cry of "All ashore!" smite sweetly on your ears. Small wonder that you hand a dollar to your sister and kiss the porter who has brought your steamer-rugs.

Ah, blessed moment when the dock begins to move away with all those laughing, crying, waving, shouting people; when snub-nosed tugs begin to warp the ship into the stream; when the final howlings of the megaphonomaniacs sound dim. ("Bon voyage, Charlie!" "Take care of yourself, old man! Think of me in gay Par-ree!")



**SMALL WONDER THAT YOU HAND A DOLLAR TO YOUR
SISTER AND KISS THE PORTER.**

You lean, in a dazed way, upon the rail, turning on maudlin grins and waving your cap at no one in particular, until the crowd becomes a moving blur upon the dock-end. The liner's nose points down the river; gentle vibrations tell you she is under way; small craft dip flags and toot as they go by; the man-made mountain of Manhattan's office buildings drops astern; the statue of Liberty, the shores of Staten Island, the flat back of Sandy Hook run past as though wound on rollers; the pilot goes over the side with a bag of farewell letters; the white yacht which has followed down the bay blows a parting blast, dips her ensign, and swings in a wide circle toward New York; the pursuing tug comes up and puts a tardy passenger aboard. Then, suddenly, like a sleep-walking dragon that wakes up, the liner shakes herself; her propellers lash the sea to suds; a wedge-shaped wake spreads out behind her, and the voyage is on in earnest.

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Reno, Roosevelt, Trusts, Wall Street, High Buildings, High Tariff, High Cost of Living, Graft, Yellow Journals, Family Hotels, the Six Best Sellers, the Sixty Worst Writers, the Four Hundred, the Hundred Million, all the things which go to make home sweet, lie astern, enveloped in the haze at the horizon. You are on the sea at last!—the vast and tireless sea which has been the inspiration of painter, poet, and pirate; the cradle of Columbus, Nelson, Paul Jones, Dewey, Hobson, and Annette Kellerman!

What is there like the sea? What is there like the free swing of a gallant ship breasting the Atlantic? Nothing! Let's sit down. No, I don't want to go and get my coat. I'm not so terribly cold yet, and my state-room smells of rubber and fresh paint. I like it better up here in the air, don't you? I'm very fond of the fresh air. I really adore it. No, it doesn't always give me a good colour. Not always. If I'm pale it is only because I sat up late last night at that farewell dinner. Perhaps I ate too much. Let's just stay here quietly in our deckchairs and watch the people.

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But, goodness! How they've changed! Where are all those pretty, fashionable women who were on deck before we sailed? Where, for instance, is the adorable blonde with the seal coat, orchids, low shoes, silk stockings, and cough?

A certain cynical friend of mine would answer this inquiry by declaring that all the attractive women go ashore, having only come to see their homely relatives and friends depart. But I don't think so. I believe the pretty ones are here, though in seclusion or disguise.

Nothing of them that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change

at the first touch of Neptune's hand. Only the professional mermaid can look well at sea. The other women either lie on deck in pale green rows and live throughout the voyage on sea biscuits and sherry, or, giving up completely, seek burrows in the ship and hibernate like animals awaiting spring. Yes, even now I think I recognise the blonde divinity. She's the third one from the end in that row of steamer-chairs in the wide part of the deck. Her orchids lie disconsolate upon her chest, her eyes are closed, her hair blows in straight, strawlike strings across her

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colourless face, her hat is on one ear, and she is wrapped like a mummy in an atrocious rug of pink and olive plaid.



I RECOGNIZE THE BLONDE DIVINITY. HER EYES ARE CLOSED, HER HAT ON ONE EAR, AND SHE IS WRAPPED LIKE A MUMMY.

Of course there's always the exception: the rosy-cheeked, plaid-coated creature who walks the deck without a hat, and lets the ringlets blow about her face. Her hair curls with the dampness. Her colour heightens with the seas and winds. You might suspect her of a golden scaly tail and fins, excepting that you see her tiny, well-shod feet as they step out firmly on the deck. They never step alone. There are lots of other feet, and larger, that delight in stepping with them. The very wind that loves her wafts her friends—wafts them with tobacco-smoke, as like as not:

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"I beg your pardon, does this smoke trouble you?"

"Oh, no! Not in the least.
My brothers all smoke. } Cigar,
I adore the smell of a good } Pipe,
Keep right on, *please*." } Cigarette.

"Thanks awfully. Perhaps you'd like to walk around to the other side and see the lightship?"

"Oh, *thanks!*" She thanks him for the lightship as if it were a bunch of roses.

And so they walk, and walk, and walk, and walk—she near the rail, he careering on beside her, hurdling over the foot-rests of the rows of steamer-chairs, and tripping now and then upon the feet extending from them. And sometimes she sits down and shows him magazines which he has seen before, and he leans over very far, and points to things, and she points, too, and his hand touches hers, and he begs pardon, and she excuses him, of course, and laughs—and little locks of hair have touched his cheek. And then they walk again, and then she feeds him chocolates (sent by some poor chap who had to stay behind) with her own rosy finger-tips, and then another light looms up ahead, all golden, and then—How short the voyage has seemed!

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Ah, feet that twinkle, cheeks that hold your roses when the world is tottering and green! Ah, youth! Ah, blowing curls! Ah, Delta Kappa Epsilon! Ah, Alpha and Omega! Ah, snapshots, shuffleboard, and sea! Ah, confidences beside a life-boat on the upper deck!... "And I was taken with you from the second that I saw you!"

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"And I with *you*—!"

"*Were* you—honestly—?"

"Yes, dear—!"

"*Dearest*—!"

Of course we didn't overhear them; it was the third life-boat on the port side of the ship that overheard, as it has overheard so many other times on other voyages.

As for ourselves, we were not even up there, but were sitting in the lounge, trying, as I recollect, to match passengers with names upon the sailing list, and failing very badly. The woman whom we picked for Mrs. H. Van Rensselaer Somebody (travelling with two maids, two valets, one Pomeranian, one husband, and no children) proves to be a Broadway showgirl; and the one we dubbed a duchess, the proprietor of a Fifth Avenue frock-foundry. Showgirls, milliners, and dressmakers are very often the "smart" people of the ship, and it must be regretfully admitted that duchesses too often fail to mark themselves by that arrogance and overdress which free-born American citizens have a right to expect of them.

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It always seems to me they ought to put the peers and persons of interest at the head of the passenger-list; but they do not. The first place on the list of every liner is reserved for Mr. Aaron, precisely as the last place is invariably held for Mr. Zwissler. But though the alphabetical roller irons out our names in rows, it does not iron out our tastes and personalities. We may still be quite as common or exclusive as we wish. Take, for instance, the H. Van Rensselaer Somebodys (of New York, Newport, and Paris). Low down on the list, they are, nevertheless, up high on the ship. They will remain throughout the voyage upon the topmost deck (cabins de luxe A, B, C, and D) in a state of exclusive and elegant sea-sickness. You will not see them. They have "absolutely nothing in common" with any of the other passengers—excepting *mal de mer* and perchance a wife or husband ex-officio.

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HOW THE SHIP ROLLS AND LURCHES!

Of course we have an opera-singer on board—a lady with a figure like the profile of a disc record. No home on the rolling deep can be complete without one. You feel as if you really knew her personally, having heard her voice so often upon your coffee-mill at home. And of course we have an actor or an actress with us. A liner might as well attempt to go to sea without a rudder as without one.

Also, if we are to have full measure, there must be on board a playwright or a novelist, a scientific man, an absconder, a bishop, a transatlantic sharper; a group of nasal people "personally conducted" by a man with a sad, patient face; a lord, or at the very least, a baron and some counts. The other passengers are, for the most part, colourless and quiet people like ourselves.

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The men upon a liner are divided into two broad classes: the deck crowd and the smoke-room crowd. I can not tell you much about the former, as I see them only now and then at meals; but the smoke-room is always full of pleasant chaps. You see, the smoke-room on an English liner is made (like English law) for men only, and, being made for men, it is the most comfortable place upon the ship. It is my habit to make for the smoke-room as soon as I decently can (or even sooner), there to lie upon a leather couch, feet up, back propped against a cushion, and smoke, or

doze, or read, or talk, or think about the endlessness of transatlantic trips. Only two things can drive me from the smoke-room: one is the smoke-room steward, who closes up at night; the other is my own sense of shipboard duty toward family or friends. Occasionally one has to go and see how they are faring.

How the ship rolls and lurches the moment that one rises from the leather couch! How cold and damp and windy is the deck, how desolate the ladies' cabin when one comes from the snugness of the smoke-room! Upon a narrow seat just inside the cabin door, an indelicate old person lies, eyes closed and jaws agape. Across the room, a book turned downward in her lap, sits the forlorn object of your fond solicitude. Her eyes are gazing straight ahead, at nothing.

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"Ah, dear," you say, approaching with the best show of gaiety that you can muster, "here you are, eh? I thought I'd come and see if you wanted me."

"Oh, no."

"Did that canned pineapple disagree with you? I'm glad *I* didn't touch it. Well, then, I'll run in and see them auction off the pool. You won't mind? By-by, dear."

You think that you want air. Reeling to the wind swept deck, you cling unsteadily to an iron post at the fore part of the ship. Your cap goes flying overboard, carried, like an aeroplane, upon the gale; your cigar is blown to shreds; you feel the sting of cold salt spray upon your face; your eyeballs rock with the great bow of the ship, which rears itself in air, higher, higher, higher, then smashes down upon the sea, throwing green, hissing mountains off to either side, only to rear and smash again a million times.

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Yet some people say this is agreeable! this senseless movement of a ship, this utter waste of time and energy! But you know better. You let go of the post, bolt down the deck, dive into the smoke-room, and fling yourself again upon the leather couch. As you touch it, a magic calm o'erspreads the sea. Then all is well until your sense of duty pricks again.



**AH, CONFIDENCES BESIDE A LIFE-BOAT
ON THE UPPER DECK!**

That the smoke-room is iniquitous, I own—as iniquitous as a comfortable club, with nice dark wainscoting, leather chairs and couches, and little bells to touch when good cigars and other things are wanted. It is, therefore, quite the nicest place on the whole ship.

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My deck-walking friends will not subscribe to this, of course. They call my smoke-room views and habits anything but healthy, and urge me to come out upon the cold and slippery decks, and get the chilly "benefits" of being on the sea. Alas! there is but one benefit for me, and that is Europe. I detest the sea. I abhor it with an awful loathing. It offends alike my physical system and my sense of proportion. It is too sickeningly out of scale, too hideously large!

Do not fancy that I object to water, as such. In glasses, in bath-tubs, under bridges, or trimmed with swans and water-lilies, water is all well enough. But to put so much of it in one place is a wasteful, vulgar show!

You see that I am telling you the truth about the sea. I am not one to sit upon the shore and write you poetry (of the kind that is described as rollicking) about it. What occupation could be more despicable than that of making sea-songs to mislead the public? [Pg 28]

The sea! The sea! The open sea!
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!
I never was on the dull, tame shore,
But I loved the great sea more and more.

Do you grasp the ambiguity, the subtle trickery of that last line? What does it really mean? It means that Bryan W. Procter, who wrote it, had to be upon the shore to love the sea; that the more he was upon the shore the more he loved the sea and that the more he was upon the sea the more he loved the shore. In other words, he loathed the sea, as I do. And I am told he hardly left his native England for dread of the Channel trip.

As for Coleridge, Cunningham, and Campbell, it is only too evident that they wrote sea-songs in vain celebration of their own initials. Byron and Wallace Irwin were probably bribed by the transatlantic steamship companies and the Navy Department. [Pg 29]

And not one of them is a realist. There have been two realists who have written poetry of the sea. One is Shakespeare, who wrote: "Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground." The other is James Montgomery Flagg, who in his "All in the Same Boat" exposes the sea down to its very depths. The sea treated him abominably. He retaliated by throwing a book. If the sea had any sense of shame it would dry up, and so would certain of the passengers upon it. The Cheerful One, for instance:

"He sees you are dozing, he knows you are ill;
But he *will* sidle up, just to say,
As he crowds his gay person on half of your chair,
'Well, how's the boy feeling to-day?'"

Don't ever fancy that the Cheerful One among the passengers inquires thus because he cares a whit. He only wishes to emphasise his own immunity from *mal de mer*, and blow the smoke of his disgusting pipe into your face. Neither his stomach nor his intellect is sensitive. He has a monologue on sea-sickness: it is all nonsense, imagination. It denotes weakness, not so much of the stomach as of the mentality, the will, the character. And besides, you don't call *this* rough, do you? You ought to have crossed with him in the old *Nausia* in 'eighty-nine. Fourteen days and the racks never off the table! Only two other passengers at meals, and—don't you feel it coming?—the captain said it was the—but you fill in the rest. Ah, if the *Nausia* had only sunk with all on board! [Pg 30]



QUITE THE NICEST PLACE ON THE WHOLE SHIP IS THE SMOKE-ROOM.

When the voyage is smooth and the Cheerful One is denied the joy of making sea-sick folk feel sicker, he is disappointed but not idle, for he may still extort confessions from untravelled persons. You know him: the solid, red-faced man who dresses for dinner and sits at the head of the table eating fried things loud and long when it is rough. He wears travel as though it were the Order of the Garter, and tells you, between mouthfuls, about all the ships that sail the seas. "No, sir! Pardon *me!* The table on this ship cannot compare with that of the old *Gorgic*. The *Potterdam's* the only ship for table outside the Ritz-Carlton boats, though Captain Van der Plank's a personal friend of mine. He knows what eating *is*, sir! Still, I like the small boats—no elevators, gymnasiums, and swimming-pools for me. I like to know I'm at sea, sir." And all the time he's casting round for a victim who has never been across before.

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You see, there is something very ignominious in making a first transatlantic trip. No one should ever do it. Everybody should begin with the second or third trip. Yet I remember a little Kansas City lawyer I met on the *New Amsterdam*, who didn't seem to be ashamed of owning up. He was bald-headed and, despite the twinkling eyes behind his spectacles, solemn-looking. His bald head felt a draught from an open port-hole during dinner on the first night out, and it was when he asked the "waiter" to "close the window" that the "seasoned traveller" (as they love to call themselves) snapped up his cue. Turning in his seat and bringing his wide white shirt-front to bear full upon his victim, he raised a foghorn voice and asked the dreaded question:

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"Ever been abroad before?"

We all squirmed with sympathy for the little man.

"No," he replied, looking up with a mild, innocent expression.

The shirt-front bulged; the watery blue eyes looked up and down the table for attention, then:

"That so?" with a patronising air of feigned surprise. "*I've* been over thirty-four times!"

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"Ever been in Omaha?" returned the lawyer blandly.

"Why—no."

"That so?" replied the lawyer, with fine mimetic quality. "*I* go there every week!"

Oh, Innocents, as you set out on your first trip abroad, don't let yourself be bullied by the boastful! Call the steward a waiter, call the port-hole a window, call the promenade deck the front porch, but call oh, call the transatlantic bully down! Be ready for him the instant he bawls that he's a member of the Travellers' Club. For the rest, be the ingenuous traveller, if you like. Be the man who has a mania for sitting at the captain's table, the man who goes abroad to get a lot

of labels on his suit-case, the man who buys a set on Broadway (for two dollars) and sticks them on at home, the man who howls when bands play "Dixie," the man who wears the Stars and Stripes upon his hat, the man who gambles with the racy-looking stranger underneath the warning smoke-room sign (and stops payment on the cheque by cable), be personally conducted, be anything you like; but if you ever get to patronising people who are sea-sick, if you ever get to being proud of having crossed the ocean oftener than little Kansas City lawyers, do this:

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Wait until the ship is settled for the night, go out on the dark deck, step over to the rail, and place the left hand lightly but firmly upon it. Then give an upward and outward jump, raising the feet and legs to the right, in such manner as to permit them to pass freely over the obstruction. When they are well over, remove the left hand from the rail. This is called vaulting. The water may be cold, but you won't mind it very long. And one word more: Don't gurgle; somebody might hear you and stupidly spoil all by crying out, "Man overboard!"

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If you decide to "end it all"—which, I believe, is the expression adopted by the best authorities—there is one humane suggestion I would make. End it before the ship's concert. There's absolutely no use in just living on and saying you won't go to the concert, for that is just what everybody else says, yet everybody always goes. There is a horrible fascination about a ship's concert, something hypnotic that draws you, very much against your word and will. I always think of it as a sort of awful antidote that is given to the passengers to counteract the poison of the steady boredom of the ship. It is an event in the voyage, just as the appendicitis operation is an event in life. And as the only people who enjoy the appendicitis operation are the doctors, the only people who go gaily to the concert are those who go there to perform.

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The chairman, for instance, enjoys it very much. He is a peer, a member of Parliament, or the United States consul at Shepherd's Bush, and he begins his speech by stating that the proceeds of the entertainment will be equally divided between the Seamen's Funds of New York and Liverpool, or somewhere else. It is then necessary to explain what seamen are. They are "these brave, watchful fellows who have our lives in their hands." At this, the chairman looks at the table stewards, who stand about the walls with their napkins and their middle-class grins; brave, watchful fellows trying to look as if they really held our lives and not our dinners in their hands.

His duty to the Seamen's Funds accomplished, the chairman passes on to other things. Just what they are depends upon his nationality. If he be a British chairman, his speech will be composed of throaty sounds, coughs, clearings of the throat, and mumblings, through which the quick ear of the auditor may catch the following remarks:

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"As a matter of fact——"

"Don't you know——"

"I mean to say——"

Now and then there comes a British chairman with a wide oratorical scope. In his case these additional expressions will occur:

"After all, now——"

"You Americans——"

"Eh, what?"

With the American chairman it is different. You understand his speech and only wish you didn't. After telling you that "it is a great pleasure," he continues through allusions to:

"This international occasion——"

"Our English cousins——"

"Hands across the sea——"

"Blood is thicker than water——"

Then comes a humorous story about an Englishman, an American, and an Irishman, at which the English passengers laugh, having a tradition that "you Yankees are such droll chaps!" The chairman now switches quickly from the quasi-ridiculous to the pseudo-sublime, and works up to his big moment, which has for its climax the table-pounding statement that "the Anglo-Saxon race must and shall predominate!"

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This is violently applauded by everybody but a Frenchman, who writhes horribly and Fletcherises his handkerchief.



**YOUR CAP GOES FLYING OVERBOARD;
YOUR CIGAR IS BLOWN TO SHREDS.**

When the applause is over, the entertainment begins with the announcement that the Opera-Singer and the Polish Pianist are unable to appear, owing to indisposition—which really means an ingrowing disposition not to do so. They have, however, sent "liberal donations" to the Fund. We then find that "we are nevertheless so fortunate as to have with us to-night" a young actor. The Actor gives a serio-comic recitation. But his encore is his *pièce de résistance*. It proves to be a vivid verse about marine disaster, a form of selection obviously suited to the occasion. Where, except at a ship's concert, can one get the full value of such lines as

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"We are lost!" the captain shouted,
As he staggered down the stair—

By turning one's head only slightly, one can actually see the stair, all ready for the captain. Suppose we hit a derelict at this very moment! We might see the whole thing acted out!

After this recitation some one tries to play on the piano. In the middle of the piece the ship gives an obliging lurch, but to no purpose; for, though the performer slips off the stool, striking with his hands something that sounds like the lost chord, and with his body two ladies who are waiting for their turn, he is picked up and put back on the stool to finish.

When he has done so, his rescuers spring blithely forward, one playing the accompaniment very badly while the other renders "Araby." "Araby" is always sung at a ship's concert. Likewise a young Englishman invariably sings "The Powder Monkey."

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The English have peculiar views on singing. Mere matters of voice and ear make not the slightest difference to them. It is like going to war, or playing on the flute: one can't refuse, I mean to say, if one is asked. Eh, what? The only man in England who has a right to say he cannot sing is one who is literally dumb, and as he cannot say it, it is never said. And so, you see, Britannia Rules the Wave, and all that sort of thing.

At the end of the concert, "God Save the King" strikes up, and everybody rises and lifts such voice as he has in song, the American passengers labouring under a conviction that the words begin "My country, 'tis of thee," until the Britons drown them out.

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But we have our turn, for "The Star-Spangled Banner" is played immediately after. The words of this excellent song (as Mr. Rupert Hughes has pointed out) begin with something of this sort:

Oh say, can you see by the dawn's early light
How the la ta-ta ta, and the ta-ta ta tum-tum.

So we proceed until we reach the spirited "ba-a-an-ner ye-et wa-ave," and the shrieking climax of "the la-and—of—the—free-e-e-e!" The object of the game is not to let the British find out that we don't know the words.

On German ships, particularly those in the Mediterranean service, the gay occasion of the voyage will be the Captain's Dinner, a function which doubtless draws its name from the fact that the captain is invariably absent from the table. But if the captain doesn't come, everybody else does, and there is more dress than usual, and there are lights inside the ices. After dinner, the deck is illuminated with coloured electric bulbs, the band plays, and the people "trip the light fantastic toe," as country papers put it. On German liners it's not always light, but it is frequently fantastic.

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There are two great events that occur on this occasion. Some young men from the section which is the backbone of our country—if not it's fashion centre—appear on deck in dinner-coats and derby hats. They have read somewhere a fashion note stating that "the derby or bowler hat is the one headpiece *de rigueur* with the Tuxedo or dinner suit," and they mean to be *comme il faut* upon their trip abroad, or "bust." The other great event is the ship's belle in her pink chiffon. It makes you almost wish you were a dancing-man, to see her. But there are dancing-men enough—among them the ship's doctor. He leads her in the mazes of the waltz and, while dancing, is given an anæsthetic, in shape of a languishing glance or two. Before he comes to, his partner has performed a minor operation on him—the amputation of a button.

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You overhear her on the tender, as you leave the ship next day: "Oh, yes, I love the sea. You can let yourself go and be sure of getting out of everything in a week!" Perhaps you see her in Paris, with new escorts. Perhaps she is on the same boat when you go home again. And if she's not, there's some one else just like her. And also there is some one just like each of the other passengers with whom you left New York.

But for all that, there are differences between the voyage east and the voyage west. Letters of credit have shrunk, wardrobes have increased, and the handiwork of the European bill-poster may be seen on trunks and bags as that of his American confrère is seen at home on ash-barrels and fences. And there's more to talk about when you are going west: Paris dressmakers, European hotels, and the American custom-house. If you talk with Europeans, it is always nice to give them fresh impressions as to what's the matter with their country and with them.

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So the gray, dismal voyage passes. At last there comes the morning when you wake to see the sunshine streaming through your port-hole; when, though your clothing and the flowered cretonne curtains of your berth are swinging freely back and forth in time with creaking sounds which chase each other through the bounding ship, you do not care, because your heart is glowing with an unaccustomed happiness.

"Fane brate day, sir," says the steward, in a cheery voice, as he brings in your hotwater can.



**THERE IS A HORRIBLE FASCINATION ABOUT A SHIP'S
CONCERT SOMETHING HYPNOTIC THAT DRAWS YOU, VERY
MUCH AGAINST YOUR WORD AND WILL.**

"A little rougher, isn't it?" you return, as if you hoped it was.

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"A bit *fresher*, perhaps, sir," he corrects. "She did put 'er foot in a few 'oles lahst night. See the land, sir?"

Ah, that's why you're so gay!

"Land! Where?"

You leap from your berth to the port-hole in one bound.

A schooner and a coastwise steamer are in sight, gulls are swinging in long circles with the ship, and far away on the horizon lies a haze which is America.

You dress with care and hurry to the deck. You bow and give a gay "good morning!" to some

people you've not spoken to before. You even have a word for the man who always walks with a pedometer, and the one who is coming back from Germany after having put a noiseless soup-spoon on the market. The deck is all abloom with pretty girls in pretty hats and pretty suits.

Even the ship is making ready for the shore. Hatches are off, busy donkey-engines are hustling mail-bags up from dark recesses within, stewards are smiling as they rush about with trunks and rolls of rugs.

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"I'm Boots, sir. Don't forget Boots, sir."

Ah, no, good Boots! Thrice welcome, Boots! And here's thy toll, already set aside, like all the other tips, in envelopes.

Land ho!

The world is blithe and gay—except for one depressing thought. The nearer you get to the New York custom-house, the heavier becomes the load of luggage on your mind. Dresses, hats, wraps, lingerie, so gaily bought in Paris, lie withering like Dead Sea fruit in the forlorn cold storage of furiously labelled wardrobe trunks.

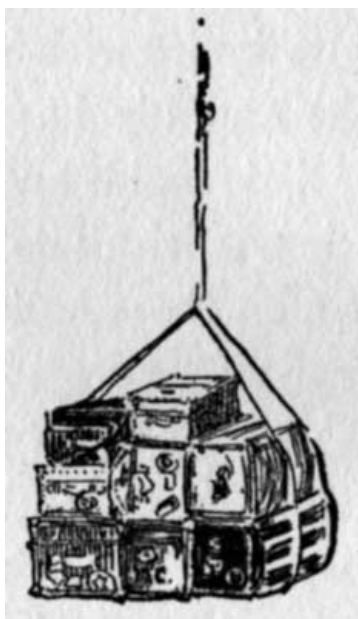
"*Must* I declare that Paris motor-coat? It never fitted, and it's fairly worn to shreds!"

"Yes, dear, everything. And sh-h! There are spotters on the ships, you know."

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The United States custom-house spotter ought to look like a detective, but he doesn't. Instead of playing Foxy Quiller, he plays bridge, and probably with you. He adores the ladies—the dear ladies, God bless 'em! For it is the ladies whom the spotter mostly spots: the pretty ladies with big state-rooms and big trunks and big hats; the pretty ladies with the little maids and little evening gowns and little pearls. The spotter has to be the sort of man these ladies like, or else the Government will change his spots. In short, he is a perfect dear! So when, at bridge, he makes the coy confession that he is taking French silk stockings over to his sister and wonders if he'll "have trouble on the pier," your wife tells him just what she is doing. ("One can't mistake a gentleman!") She tells him that she's going into her state-room to sew some New York labels into Paris gowns and hats—and that is how she comes to lose twelve dresses and a twenty-thousand-dollar necklace, and have hysterics on the dock, and how she never sends that dinner invitation to him at the club in Forty-fourth Street.

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