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R. A. Campbell, Editor.  
E. T. Hines, Affie Griffin, Associate Editors.  
W. C. Wicker, Circulation Manager.  
W. P. Lawrence, Business Manager.

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**THE VOYAGE.**

In preparing for a trip to Italy, the traveler's first step should be to engage a stateroom or berth, upon a south-bound ocean steamer, some months in advance, if the trip is to be made during the rush season, which extends from January to July 1st.

One cannot do better than to take the North German Lloyd line from New York, as their steamships are either entirely new, or of recent construction, and embody the best improvements and safeguards that the modern science of shipbuilding has devised. Among other general features of these steamships are extensive promenade decks, fine staterooms and excellent ventilation.

Behold us on board, the last farewells are said, the stay-at-homes leave the ship at the sounding of the gong, the gang-plank is withdrawn, the wheels revolve and the great vessel slowly moves away from the wharf; then we begin to believe that the dream is coming true, we are really en route for Italy, the land of history and romance, the home of art and song.

We steam slowly down the harbor past the Statue of Liberty holding its torch aloft, Staten Island with its beautiful homes, Forts Lafayette and Hamilton with their dogs of war chained and sleeping, down the great pathway of nations, thru' the Narrows, out into the broad ocean.

As the shore is left behind, we look about us to see who and what our traveling companions may be; we feel that we are in a huge cosmopolitan hotel; every nationality and type is represented: Jew and gentile, French, Germans, Swiss, Italians; teachers, musicians, wealthy aristocrats, all degrees and kinds; but we must hasten to our staterooms and arrange our belongings for the long voyage, and before we shall be forced to take to our berths and pay the toll demanded by Father Neptune of nearly all who invade his domain.

At six p. m. dinner is served, to which we are summoned by the silvery notes of the cornet; the tables are brilliant with glass and silver, the linen of snowy whiteness, the orchestra plays, and a most ex-

cellent dinner is served in various courses.

Then to the deck, where wrapped in a warm steamer rug, and stretched at full length in a steamer chair, we watch the rising moon until sleep, or sickness, warns us to seek our berth without delay.

About the third day we can begin to enjoy ourselves; awakened by the cheerful strains of the orchestra, we hasten to dress and reach the deck: the sun is shining over the vast expanse of waters, the white capped waves dash up the sides of the ship like hungry wolves seeking their prey. The cold salt air gives us such an appetite that we hasten to the dining salon, where a breakfast, unsurpassed by any hotel, is offered and greedily accepted. The day is passed on deck, making acquaintances, reading and sleeping; at ten a. m. bouillon, with sandwiches and crackers is served on the deck, and all find themselves ready for it; luncheon from twelve to one, a substantial one too, at four p. m., we go to the salon again for tea, coffee or chocolate, cake and fruit. dinner at six. One has a good appetite for every meal.

Nearly every evening some entertainment is given, concerts, readings, and at least one dance. During the day the more active ones play shuffle-board, or ringtoss; other little groups will be playing cards, solitary spinsters their game of solitaire. Every one is friendly, but soon you find the congenial ones, and you have your own crowd, and such a good time: many lasting friendships are made in the near companionship of life on board ship. The days pass with nothing more exciting than a school of porpoise, or a distant ship signalling a "how do you do?" to vary the pleasing monotony. The ships follow a route which is below the latitude of 40, and which passes directly through the islands of the Azores.

These islands are passed on the fifth day out from N. Y., and they offer a most picturesque and welcome sight to the passing voyager, their green slopes dotted with white houses, and their precipitous sides marked with thousands of cascades that fall over the cliff's into the ocean. Fields of mustard in full bloom present a beautiful picture.

The islands are mountainous and of volcanic formation, the mountains being cultivated to their very tops, while the rocky surfaces show distinct shades of pink, blue and green. The delicious fragrance of orange trees most pleasing to the senses, was wafted to us over the water, and followed us for many miles.

On the ninth day we are told we shall soon reach Gibraltar, probably, in the early morning, and we are all excitement.

At five o'clock in the morning the rising bell rung and we hastened into our clothes, eager for a sight of the famous rock; we snatched a hasty breakfast, and were off on the tender by six forty. Before entering the straits of Gibraltar, the steamer passes Cape Trafalgar where Lord Nelson won his famous victory over the Spanish and French fleets in the year 1805. On entering the straits, at the right we could see Tangier, the port of Morocco, and farther inland, the coast and mountains of Africa. On landing at Gibraltar, we first visited the markets. Such masses of fruit, flowers and vegetables, and so picturesquely arranged, we had never seen. Purchases are given out in

grass baskets, which are held together by slipping the long handles through the sides and knotting them.

The stalls are presided over by Turks and Moors, some in white turbans, others in red. Then the never-to-be-forgotten walk through the town, past fascinating shops displaying malta laces and beautiful drawn work, meeting droves of goats being led around to be milked, the owners with different sized cups round their shoulders. Little boys returning from confirmation with white ribbons tied round their foreheads, Spanish beauties with glowing eyes, stiff English matrons joggling to the left, bare legged Moors, flashing-toothed Turks, dignified British soldiers on handsome cabs, tiny burros loaded down with wood and coal in bags, convicts with letters all over their white suits and stockings, carriages all yellow, with canvas tops: officers' offices, barracks, churches, and on up to the gardens which words cannot describe. We noted specially the olive trees with their fine pale gray-green leaves: Hollyhocks with branches like trees. Heliotropes many feet high.

Tall pine trees with luxuriant vines thick with beautiful purple flowers, growing over their tops and hanging down in festoons. Walls covered with geraniums: borders of fine leaf cactus, larger ones twelve feet high. Calla lilies in masses like shrubbery, hibiscus like trees.

All the terraces and seats are of artistically chiseled stone, very white; white stone steps lead from one to the other.

But what concerns the travelers here, however, is not the settlement, the garden or the people; but the rock itself with its intrinsic grandeur, wonderful fortifications and impressive history. The side fronting Europe is more than fourteen hundred feet high, and forms a precipice so straight that a boulder pushed off the summit would be uninterrupted in its fall to the base. What also thrills one, is the fact that beneath its surface is a labyrinth of galleries all hewn and blasted out of solid rock by incredible labor and expense: and at intervals pierced with port holes through each of which peers forth the muzzle of a cannon capable of hurling shot and shell for many miles. Moreover the rock is ruled by martial law, at sunset all entrances are closed, and the tourist must leave when the evening gun proclaims the passing of the day.

As we were steaming back to the ship, a beautiful white cloud settled over the top of the rock, looking like an immense ostrich plume, its long fronds reaching down and enveloping the rugged sides. It was evening when we were once more on our way and gliding swiftly towards the Orient. As we swept Eastward, the coast of Africa was the first to vanish, next the dim outlines of the Spanish main-land faded from our view, and finally the mighty fortress itself dropped behind the darkening curtain of the night. Scarcely a ripple disturbed the surface of the classic sea.

Only three days more and we reach our destination, Naples.

The next evening after leaving Gibraltar was the grand ball; half the deck was curtained off with gay flags, and lighted with long rows of red and blue lights. The dining room and tables were decorated for dinner; tall palms, reaching to the ceiling, flowers, favors, flags and colored lights made a scene of entrancing

beauty, before dessert was served, the lights were turned off, and the waiters marched in, bearing illuminated puddings; the officers made speeches, and the band played; dancing was kept up till midnight.

It is our last day on board and a feeling of sadness is mingled with the pleasure and excitement of landing; the beautiful Mediterranean, beautiful though treacherous, has been kind to us, its smooth surface giving no hint of the terrific storms that sometimes sweep over it, and its beauty and loveliness will remain with us for many a day.

And now we are approaching the Bay of Naples that holds within its curving arms the history and legends of two thousand years. Its placid surface is a magic



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