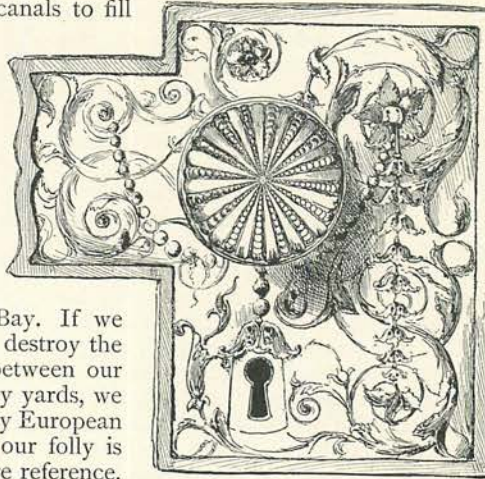


are being abandoned year by year. While Europe spends millions on canals and waterways, while France is trying to make every little stream navigable, and England is trying to turn her interior cities into sea-ports, we permit our canals to fill up or foolishly give them away to impetuous railroads for road-beds. Is it wise? Are we safe in trusting all our freight business to railroad corporations? To-day we can, if the need come, send gun-boats inland from the Delaware to New York Bay. If we permit the railroads to destroy the business of the canal between our ship-yards and our navy yards, we may be sure that in every European War office the fact of our folly is carefully noted for future reference. Once Great Britain fought a great battle to destroy the water route that connects the port of New York with the back door of New England. Saratoga was

fought to destroy a vital water route. Fortunately, the English generals who planned in London thus to cut the country in two failed, and yet to-day we are abandoning our canals

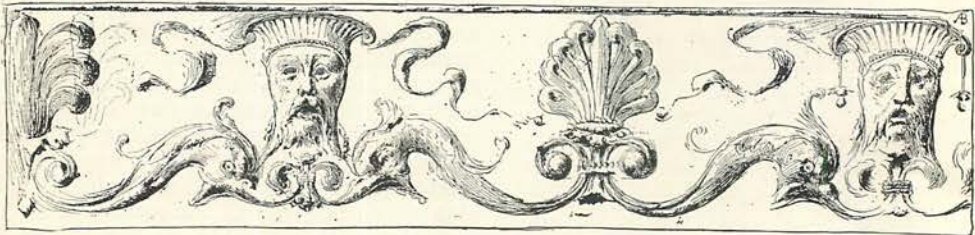
and see our great internal steam navigation system decay without a thought of the consequences.

On the other hand—for there is a brighter side to every picture—there is a disposition among the traveling public to demand larger, finer, and safer boats everywhere. We are being taught by English tourists who visit us how to see our own country. We may complacently talk of our limited trains and all that. Every foreigner who visits us asks first of all for our steamboat routes, because our lake, river, and Sound boats are known of all the world.



STATEROOM DOOR LOCK, "PURITAN."

Charles Barnard.



RAIL-FACING, "PURITAN."

THE ADVANCE IN STEAMBOAT DECORATION.

ONLY a few years ago it seemed as though sordid ugliness was nowhere so firmly entrenched as in our ferry-boats, while the "floating palaces" on which we betook ourselves to Albany or Newport were synonyms for the most pretentious bad taste. There could not be a clearer sound of our progress in art than the fact that both these classes of boats are now being built to satisfy a cultivated eye as well as to transport a comfort-loving body with safety and speed.

The most conspicuous example of a desire to put really good decorative work into a steamboat interior is the *Puritan* of the Fall

River line. The first step—and the most novel that could have been taken—was to select an artist of experience and skill and give him complete control of the task. Every item in the decoration and furnishing of the *Puritan* has been conceived by Mr. Frank Hill Smith, and designed and carried out under his careful superintendence. The success which he has achieved in a field where no precedents guided him certainly deserves great praise. I do not mean judged simply by the standard set by the boat-interiors of other days—this would be no test at all; I mean judged by the same standard we should use if a luxurious home or great public building were in question. It may be thought by some that soberer

colors and a smaller amount of ornamental detail would be more appropriate in so utilitarian an interior, Mr. Smith's scheme showing only white and very pale colors and a profuse employment of gold as well as of carven or molded decoration in low relief. But the American people are accustomed in these great inland vessels to awkward attempts at ball-room effects, and will unquestionably be better pleased with this artistic version of the same idea than with any other kind of treatment that could have been chosen; and, after all, the critic's place is not to weigh an artist's conception in the balance of other person's tastes, but to accept it frankly and only discuss the quality of its expression.

The first point of excellence to be emphasized is that Mr. Smith gives us no mere heterogeneous assemblage of pretty patterns and tints, but a systematic scheme of adornment, based on architectural principles, coherent throughout, carefully studied in all its varied details, and executed with technical skill. Italian Renaissance forms served as his inspiration, and every item from end to end of his elaborate work is harmonious in character and as well adapted in scale as in motive to the exact place it holds.

Reaching the quarter-deck we find the walls divided into panels by fluted pilasters which support a dignified frieze in low relief. The panels are filled with half-draped floating female figures, in very low relief, which were modeled by the well-known sculptor Mr. Donoghue. These figures are of an ivory-white tone, relieved against a pale yellow background. All the architectural features are likewise ivory-toned and are lavishly gilded. The ordinary staterooms are finished throughout in wood, painted white, and perfectly plain. The larger rooms are simply but prettily decorated in white, and the tender tones of blue, yellowish pink, and yellow everywhere employed, with less use of gold than appears in the saloons. The dining-room is dignified and attractive, and even the barber-shop has neither been neglected by the artist nor over-adorned. But, of course, the center of interest is the main saloon with its encircling gallery leading to the upper tier of staterooms. Here the festal effect of Mr. Smith's scheme is most strikingly apparent, and, when the great space is lighted by its multitude of incandescent burners, the "average citizen" will have his love for a gay and luxurious-looking environment fully met, while a more critical eye will be disturbed by no heavy excess or trivial fantasticality. It is impossible to dwell here upon the details of this saloon, which is covered with a pale-blue ceiling, while a red carpet gives it warmth and richness. I can only say a word about the wrought-iron screens

which, supported by solid gilded piers, form the gallery rail. Their design is extremely graceful, and, fortunately, they are not gilded, but left black to bring a needed accent of vigor and decision into the pale delicacy of the general scheme. Still more attractive and much more original than this railing are the iron-work supports for the electric lights, forming coronals around the masts and extending upward to the gilded capitals, that give the masts an architectural character, in graceful spirals from which the lights project at varied angles. Unfortunately our little illustration does not show how beautiful and dignified yet extremely effective these fixtures really are; but the general character of their design can be appreciated, and the good sense and good taste which have known how to serve a novel practical purpose thoroughly well by means of a novel and expressive manner of treatment.

In the *New York*, the new day boat of the Albany line, we find agreeable rooms, sensibly treated in those dark tones which were altogether desirable when service in the hot hours of summer was to be considered. The walls are paneled to the top with ash, and the carpets are green; and while the details can hardly be called artistic in treatment, the general color-effect is charming, except as regards the tones supplied by stained glass of rather crude and glaring tints.

But perhaps the most wholly satisfactory piece of decoration that has yet been set afloat is found—shall I be believed?—in a ferry-boat designed to carry the long-suffering "suburban resident" upon his daily trips from Hoboken to New York. The *Bergen* being a screw instead of a side-wheel steamer, the cabins run through from end to end; and the purely utilitarian reasons which prescribed her external lines have resulted in an imposing perspective of singularly graceful curvature. There would have been some monotony, however, had the whole length been left unbroken; so the artist skillfully divided it by the projecting screens shown in our picture, which cut the walls into three compartments without at all interfering with convenience or the freedom of the eye. The central compartment is much shorter than the others, and its decoration is emphasized by a large mirror against the inner wall and a more elaborate window than those on either side. All the windows are grouped in threes—a vast improvement upon the old uniform rows. The walls in the women's cabin are wainscoted with oak and then painted a neutral grayish green with a band of simple Renaissance decoration in white and a little gold. Parallel with the window tops runs a cornice-strip of oak, and above this again is a simple painted frieze. The faces of

the ceiling-beams are white touched with gold and the sunk panels between repeat the tone of the oak. The seats are mahogany with arms of cherry. The windows are of plain glass, but have small spaces at the top and sides filled with olive-green glass of two shades set in delicate ornamental leadings; and more of this glass gives a desirable touch of color in the lights above the wing-decks at each end. The men's cabin is more simply but as tastefully treated. The only features which are not as good as the rest are the electric lights; but these are unobtrusive, and nowhere can we find a hint of vulgarity, ostentation, or inap-

propriate ornament; nor anywhere a touch of crude ugliness—even the placards on the walls are engrossed in simple gold letters and framed in oak. These rooms, in short, which owe their excellence to the firm of artists that Mr. Louis C. Tiffany directs, might be shown to a foreigner to prove that the American people love not only cleanliness and decency, but beauty too, and know the difference between appropriate and inappropriate kinds of beauty. Need I point a contrast by explaining what a foreigner must have thought who stepped from his ocean steamer into a ferry-boat of the ancient pattern?

M. G. van Rensselaer.

AN ECHO OF ANTIETAM.



HE air was tremulous with farewells. The regiment, recruited within sight of the steeples of Waterville, and for three months in camp just outside the city, was to march the next morning. A series of great

battles had weakened the Federal armies and the authorities at Washington had ordered all available men to the front.

The camp was to be broken up at an early hour, after which the regiment would march through the city to the depot to take the cars. The streets along the route of the march were already being decorated with flags and garlands. The city that afternoon was full of soldiers enjoying their last leave of absence. The liquor shops were crowded with parties of them drinking with their friends, while others in threes and fours, with locked arms, paraded the streets singing patriotic songs, sometimes in rather maudlin voices, for to-day in every saloon a soldier may enter citizens vied for the privilege of treating him to the best in the house. No man in a blue coat was suffered to pay for anything.

For the most part, however, the men were sober enough over their leave-taking. One saw everywhere soldiers and civilians, strolling in pairs, absorbed in earnest talk. They are brothers maybe who have come away from the house to be alone with each other, while they talk of family affairs and exchange last charges and promises as to what is to be done if anything happens. Or perhaps they are business partners, and the one who has put the country's business before his own is giving his last counsels as to how the store or the shop shall be managed in his absence. Many of the

blue-clad men have women with them, and these are the couples that the people oftenest turn to look at. The girl who has a soldier lover is the envy of her companions to-day as she walks by his side. Her proud eyes challenge all who come, saying, "See, this is my hero. I am the one he loves."

You could easily tell when it was a wife and not a sweetheart whom the soldier had with him. There was no challenge in the eyes of the wife. Young romance shed none of its glamour on the sacrifice she was making for her native land. It was only because they could not bear to sit any longer looking at each other in the house that she and her husband had come out to walk.

In the residence parts of the town family groups were gathered on shady piazzas, a blue-coated figure the center of each. They were trying to talk cheerfully, making an effort even to laugh a little. Now and then one of the women stole unobserved from the circle, but her bravely smiling face as she presently returned gave no inkling of the flood of tears that had eased her heart in some place apart. The young soldier himself was looking a little pale and nervous with all his affected good spirits, and it was safe to guess that he was even then thinking how often this scene would come before him afterwards, by the camp-fire and on the eve of battle.

In the village of Upton, some four or five miles out of Waterville, on a broad piazza at the side of a house on the main street, a group of four persons were seated around a tea-table.

The center of interest of this group, as of so many others that day, was a soldier. He looked not over twenty-five, with dark blue eyes, dark hair cut close to his head, and a