



TO 'FRISCO.

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LAST summer I had the opportunity of carrying into practical effect the long-cherished idea of crossing the Atlantic and seeing something of Canada and the great republic of America; and it occurs to me that a short paper on the means of locomotion and method of travel may not be altogether without public interest.

First as to the ships which work as regularly as ferryboats to and fro. The Inman with the *City of Paris*, and the *City of New York*, the White Star with the graceful *Teutonic*, the Cunard with the *Aurania* and other ships, have made such advances in build, accommodation and speed, that a comparison with the passenger ships of twenty years ago is hardly possible. The tonnage has rapidly increased—the highest figure now being 10,500 tons—and what the next big ship will be it is impossible to predicate; but it seems likely that we shall again come to the size, if not the lines of the *Great Eastern*.

A feature in many of the ships is their large fresh-water capacity, which goes up in some cases to 32,000 gallons, while quantities of sea-water in addition are condensed during the voyage for various purposes. Then there is the water ballast, which can be let into and out of the trimming tanks in the double bottom. The fire arrangements, and apparatus, which now include steam fire-annihilators, are of the most approved type, and separate water-tight compartments have in some ships been adopted longitudinally as well as transversely. The boiler rooms are frequently separated by bulkheads, which practically make them independent of each other. Moreover, these vessels comply most completely with the conditions of government service for armed cruisers, and are admirably fitted for the work in which they will be employed in case of war. In addition, the great speed which is obtained by such steamers as the *City of Paris* and the *Teutonic* would be of marked advantage and usefulness in case of active operations.

The staff on all these ocean steamers includes the captain, the chief officer and six or seven others, the doctor, the purser and the chief engineer with a large number of assistants. The crew, comprises A.B.'s in varying number, quarter-masters, look-out-men, masters-at-arms, carpenters, and boatswains. The class of men who enter the service as sailors and in other capacities is on the whole a good one. I asked the captain of one ship whether he carried irons. He said he had none on board, and that in the last fifteen years he had only had to apply force to one sailor at sea by fastening his arms behind his back, as he was mad drunk. Now and then a steerage passenger had had to be held by three or four men owing to the same cause, or rather curse, but as a rule the passengers as well as the crew are remarkably well behaved.

Now with regard to the duties of the staff. The captain is a man having a large sea experience, whose knowledge and frankness inspire confidence and who is a firm believer in the capabilities of the ship he commands. He exercises a general supervision over all on board and inspects every part of his ship. Most of the ships sail out and home across the Atlantic once a month, and in the course of these frequent voyages the captain makes acquaintance with many interesting people, and adds to his store of information and knowledge of men.

The chief officer replaces the captain when necessary. He takes his share in scientific observation, but as a rule has no regular watch, as his other duties are both arduous and multifarious. He is responsible for the order and cleanliness of the ship and for the proper readiness and condition of the boat gear, pump gear, the sluices, and all the various apparatus on board ship. In common with the doctor and purser he conducts daily inspections, and has, in fact, the immediate control of the general internal arrangements of the ship.

The doctor is responsible for, and has charge over the health of officers and crew, passengers and servants. He dispenses his own medicines, and in cases of illness has the same authority over the diet of his patients as the first hospital physician or surgeon in London has over that of the cases in his ward. In the steerage there are generally two hospitals, one for males and one for females, each provided with a proper staff.

The purser has entire management of the stores; sees to the Custom House manifests of freight, and is in charge of all specie and valuables as well as of the mails. To passengers he is a most important officer, as he decides on all their requirements, reasonable and unreasonable, and in fact, controls the whole economy of the ship in that respect.

The chief engineer has a most responsible task, both by reason of the machinery under his control and on account of the large staff under him, including engineers on the engines, electricians, hydraulic engineers, and refrigerator engineers. He has to look after the admission of the water-ballast, of which two or three hundred tons are frequently let in for the purpose of steadying the ship, while in heavy weather, as many as a thousand tons are often admitted. In a well-arranged engineering department on board ship, each engineer is in special charge of a certain portion of the machinery, so that any repairs required can be effected during the week in port at either end. The object of every chief engineer should be not only to see that his machinery is acting regularly, but to keep it in order for the next voyage. The firemen and stokers are also very numerous. The practice is to have three shifts in each twelve hours, and a man has the same four hours on and eight hours off both day and night. On the big ships each fireman has three fires to attend to. I am told that there are ships on which the men may have five or six.

These big ships, with their powerful engines ranging up to 10,000 horse-power, make their twenty knots an hour as easily as old ships used to make ten; and the triple expansion boilers with their feed-heaters and all the other modern improvements, materially lighten the labour of the engineer. Welsh coal is still found superior to American and on the largest steamers as much as three hundred tons a day are burnt.

I had a talk with the chief engineer upon our ship, and asked his opinion with regard to ocean speed in a fog, one of the questions then being discussed by the Maritime Conference at Washington. He replied that he did not believe in the present half-speed rule, as half-speed in one vessel is the whole speed of another! It would be best to go full speed and rely on the proper precautions and on the improved stopping power: the engines could be reversed in ten seconds. I further questioned him as to whether there would be any advantage in making Milford the permanent port of call? In reply, he pointed out that though Milford might save four hours for passengers it would be a very serious thing to take cotton and other materials away from the great commercial centre, Liverpool.

Passengers by sea nowadays have many advantages. For one and all the ventilation is admirable. The electric light is generally adopted throughout the ship, and adds to individual comfort. Some ships, too, have cabins on the upper deck, although on the main and lower decks there is no want of air and sweetness. Many cabins are heated with steam, and have private baths; indeed all through the ship the bath and sanitary arrangements are ample and complete. A vast drawing-room with a piano, a large dining-room with an organ, and a writing-room with a library of books add to the luxury of modern ocean travelling, while apart from the conversation and flirting common on ship-board, passengers have all kinds of deck games, and other amusements. The smoking saloon is large and of an evening much crowded, when stories go round, the speed of the ship during the last twenty-four hours is discussed, and lotteries on the run are arranged.

Meals on board are of great importance, and even draw a passenger from the

absorbing occupation of watching a ship in the distance ; or examining the operations of some fishing boat with its little crew of hardy fishermen ; or admiring a great school of porpoises, or the movements of a mighty whale. Another frequent occupation on board is the regular tramp up and down the deck which good sailors always indulge in. On most of the Atlantic steamers a concert is given, at least once during each voyage, in aid of some nautical charity, when much unknown talent is displayed by the passengers.

The second class accommodation is lofty, airy, and well found. There is a good saloon, and the electric light and sanitary arrangements are similar to those of the first class, while a portion of the upper deck is reserved for a second class promenade. In the steerage there are proper divisions for families, for men, and for women, and everything is done for their comfort. Indeed of steerage passengers the lot is very different from what it must have been in an old sailing ship, as shown by the fact that many of them come home nowadays to see their friends or pass the winter. It was on a ship such as I have thus briefly described that we crossed the Atlantic and in due time landed in New York.

In the course of our visit to the States and to Canada we travelled about 9,000 miles on the railroads of various companies, both East and West. Everywhere in trains I was asked by the Americans, "Well, what do you think of our arrangements? Are they not far superior to those on English lines?" My answer always was that the conditions of travel are so absolutely different in the two countries that it is impossible to make a fair comparison. In England the distances are short, the number of trains per hour very large, and the kind of accommodation which is of necessity required when you travel for days together is entirely unsuitable when you are in your compartment for a few hours, or even minutes, only. I think however that the ordinary Englishman prefers the comparative privacy which a small section of a carriage containing only six or eight people necessarily gives.

The ordinary American cars, are of one class only to which all have access. Hence the door is always on the bang. Nor is this banging of doors confined to the passengers. The conductor goes through every car after a stop at each station, collects the tickets, and departs banging the doors after him. He is followed by the brakesman whose duty it is to attend to the car fire, regulate the brakes, and announce the name of each station before the train comes to a standstill. He bangs the door too. Then comes the youth with the newspapers. These he disposes of as quickly as possible and disappears with a bang ; ere long he re-enters, this time as a vendor of apples, and as before he departs with a bang. He returns again with an armful of novels and serials ; these he places promiscuously on the knees of the passengers or on the vacant seats near them, hoping that some may be induced to buy, and again takes his departure. After a decent interval he reappears to collect his scattered goods and receive payment for the literature. His next visit will be in charge of candy and chewing gum—articles most agreeable to the American palate—his next with grapes and pears ; and by that time the turn of the papers has come round again, and the round of banging continues steadily. Then, as if this incessant banging were not enough for the toughest nerves, there is frequently added the intermittent squall of a baby, or the whistling or kicking of a small boy, or the impatient stick-tapping of an irritated traveller. The Pullman drawing-room car creates another class by the extra fee which is paid for entering it. Then again a further distinction has been created by running special trains at a higher rate of speed, composed entirely of Pullman sleepers and Pullman drawing-rooms. The Pullman sleeper is a well arranged carriage, and generally contains berths for sixteen or twenty-four persons, which in the day-time are converted into seats. The upper berths are let down from the ceiling of the car and the black attendant has a considerable amount of work to get through in preparing them for occupation at night and removing sheets and mattresses and shutting them up in the morning.

In each car is proper retiring accommodation both for men and women, and on the Pullman cars the washing apparatus is all that can be reasonably desired. In one car on the admirably managed Canadian Pacific there was even a bath, a luxury indeed. I am told too, though I did not see it myself, that on one special Pullman train there is a barber's shop, in which gentlemen can be shaved whilst making the journey.

On the long-distance trains there is either a stoppage at certain fixed stations for

meals, or from time to time a dining-room car is attached, to which all the passengers can go and obtain a good meal at a reasonable price. The arrangements of this kind are, I think, superior to what we have even on our well managed Northern lines; but of course in England it would be impossible to have dining-room cars to which all passengers should have access during the journey without adopting the American build of cars.

There are also a great number of private cars in America, and one such car is often seen at the end of a train. The private car will hold ten to sixteen persons, has a dining-room, a sleeping-berth section, a state-room for two or three people, a lavatory, a kitchen and pantry, and food and ice storage accommodation. The service is attended to by a black cook and a black steward. It is a favour to get one of these cars, and a considerable charge is made for its use. Some important American personages have their own private railway-car, fitted with every luxury; while the high officials and directors of the various companies have their cars. Apart from the privacy, the principal advantage is that you can have your car hooked on and off where you choose, and you can sleep of course anywhere; whilst the principal disadvantage is that if the train is travelling at any speed you have to put up with considerable rattling and swinging.

There are many manufacturers of first-class sleeping cars. Pullman's are the biggest works, but the Mann cars and the Wagner cars and many others are also admirable in construction and finish. When I was at Chicago I had an opportunity of going over to Pullman city, a truly marvellous place, with houses, shops, a lecture-hall, reading-rooms, an hotel, a theatre, and every other possible accommodation for some seven thousand inhabitants, all built by the Company in the course of eighteen months. It is an interesting and signal example of the energy and enterprise which characterize the Americans.

And now as to the American system of dealing with luggage. When the luggage has been weighed you receive a brass ticket with a number punched on it, for each piece of baggage, and a corresponding number, with a chain attached to it, is fastened to the piece in question. A representative of the Express Company of the city to which you are going, appears in your car, some half-hour before your arrival at your destination. You make your bargain with him, obtain your receipt, hand him your checks, which he slings on a great brass ring on his arm, and do not trouble yourself further about your property. It will usually be delivered at your hotel about an hour or an hour-and-a-half after you reach it. It is almost impossible for any ordinary traveller to get his luggage out in a reasonable time unless he follow the universal system. This arrangement is more suited to American travelling than it would be to the hurry and scurry of English lines. I think the ordinary Englishman prefers to wait a few minutes, enlist the services of a friendly porter, seize his goods as they are tumbled out of the van, get them placed on a handy hansom, and carry them off himself to his abode. He would hardly care to sit kicking his heels at home waiting for his property be delivered by the "Express." Moreover, there is another reason for the "Express," which does not yet apply so much in England. The Americans carry a small hand-bag, which suffices them for the time, and their other goods are deposited, not in portmanteaus or ordinary boxes, but in mighty cases called "Saratoga trunks," bound with tin, or iron, or brass, which it takes a couple of men to move, and which would be too heavy for an ordinary cab. On the whole then, I may say that the system in vogue in each country would hardly suit the other.

On our first arrival when driving through the streets of New York, I was especially struck with the overhead railway. This railway is supported on great iron columns, and goes down the sides of many important streets on a level with the first floor of the houses in front of which it passes. For five cents ($2\frac{1}{2}d.$) you can go from any one point on the system to any other. The railway is especially used on a fine holiday by thousands of people bound for the Central Park, the pride of the city. To the traveller this line is far more pleasant than our underground with its smoke, darkness, draughtiness, and stifling atmosphere; but in London the owners of property along the lines of streets traversed would hardly put up with the interference with their privacy, and the deterioration of the value of their property, which must inevitably accompany the building of such a line.

A development, not at all uncommon in the United States, even upon the big lines of railway, is the steam barge for taking trains over rivers or branches of the sea.

There is a good example of this in the coast line between New York and Newport ; and another in the main line between Sacramento and San Francisco. The necessity for such an arrangement hardly arises with us, as our rivers are brooks in comparison with the American waters.

The great Sound steamers are another American peculiarity. Most of them have two or three decks, all out of the water, can enter almost any shallows, are driven at a very high speed, and are, I believe, essentially unseaworthy. But as they seldom go into the open, have excellent accommodation, and are lighted splendidly with the electric light, the ordinary citizen uses them without fear, and sleeps comfortably through the night on his voyage from New York to Boston or elsewhere. Every now and then one sees an account of the explosion of the boiler of a great river steamer, and the death and injury of many on board, but that does not seem to attract much attention, and is generally due to the pernicious system of racing, so largely in vogue on the Mississippi and elsewhere.

In the principal cities of America, tramways are of three kinds—horse cars, cable cars, and electric cars ; but the cable cars and electric cars are, in many places, gradually driving the horse cars out of the field. There are several systems of electric cars, but perhaps the one most generally in use is the Thompson Houston ; and large numbers of their cars are made every year. Naturally at the commencement when the lines are first laid they do not always give very profitable results ; but in most cases after a short time there is no class of investment which is more successful or more popular amongst American capitalists.

It is not uncommon to find no carriage of any kind at a railway station, but only the car which is waiting outside to take passengers both for the hotels and the city generally. The charge is almost universally five cents per passenger for any distance.

The American private carriages are light and simple, and are generally drawn by good serviceable horses. Nearly every vehicle has a cover over-head, supported by iron rods and framing, which extends even over the coachman's seat ; as the heat of the sun in summer would often be dangerous. The carriages, though light, have to be strong, as the American roads in most cases leave much to be desired. In fact the Americans have had so much to do in developing their country that they have not had time to see to the roads. That is to come.

In many cities of the States the telegraph wires are not taken over the tops of the houses as they are in England, but are affixed in dozens to enormous posts all the way down many of the great thoroughfares. Here again I must say the American municipality rather cultivates the useful than the beautiful.

I may fairly claim that I have shown that the convenience of travellers both on sea and on land is very carefully considered ; and to those who dread the discomfort which constant change of domicile must necessarily involve, I can offer this consolation, that everything is now done to reduce it to a minimum.

One can hardly imagine how splendid is the scenery in the Selkirks, in Canada, and in various parts of the Rockies both in Canada and the States ; and it might well be worth while to take the long journey over there if it were only to enjoy the magnificent climate of San Francisco and the beauties of the gardens of Monterey. Then I should add that everywhere Englishmen are received with open arms by our American brothers. Men of all degrees, from the President and the Secretary of State to the cowboys and the miners, are ready to greet the visitor. They are anxious to give him of their best, and to make his travels agreeable.

When I left San Francisco, the manager of the Great Palace Hotel said to me, "Good-bye, I shall see you again in two years."

"Why in two years?" I asked.

"Oh, you all come back in that time," he replied ; and I feel sure he is right.