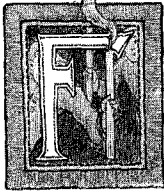
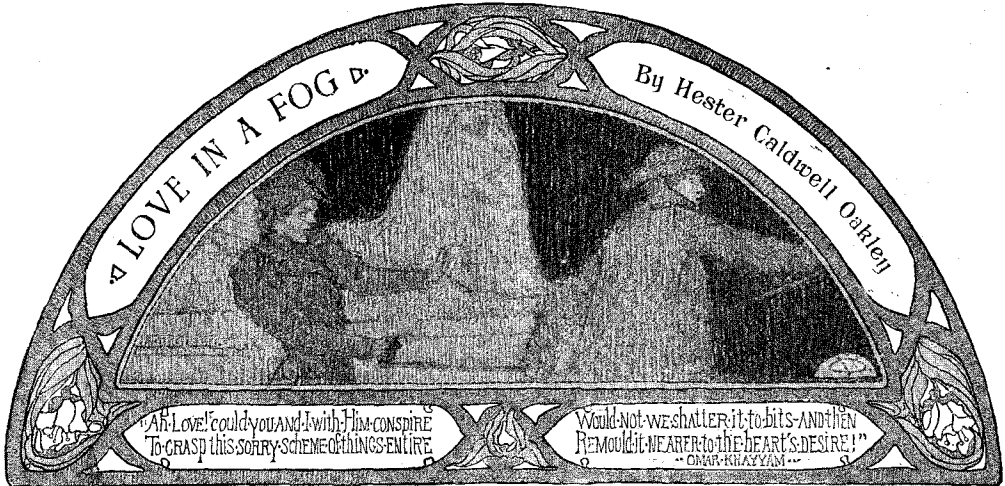


vate as ye please the other end of the bench, and I wish ye a very good afternoon."

McTurk yawned.

"Well, ye should ha' come up to the lodge like Christians instead o' chasin' your—

a-hem—boys through the length an' breadth of my covers. I think these house-matches are all rot. Let's go over to Colonel Dabney's an' see if he's collared any more poachers." That afternoon there was joy in Aves.\*



FROM time to time other figures emerged with an uncanny suddenness from the darkness, and passed with as unnatural swiftness into it again, like the unreal phantoms of a lantern-slide.

"We are no other than a moving row  
Of magic shadow-shapes that come and go,"

quoted Brewster, with the pleasure that accompanies an aptly remembered phrase—a pleasure that with him never palled, as it so often does, for want of an appreciative listener other than oneself. And then, having caught up that string of Oriental pearls in the middle, he felt along for the succeeding beads, until the beautiful fatalism, more impressive in that loneliness than ever before, seemed to lessen his habitual self-reliance.

Until now, the thought of being lost never entered his head, although he had been walking in that confusing and absolute gloom for over a quarter of an hour. He stood quite still and tried to think out the compass, gasping in rueful, incredulous amusement, as wave after wave of bewildered uncertainty swept over him.

It was just at this moment, as he so stood, trying to realize that he, Ralph Brewster, hunter and ardent woodsman, was more hope-

lessly turned about in the most familiar part of London than he had ever been in the depth of the forest primeval, that a distinct, quick call smote him from somewhere beyond in the muffling fog.

It came again: "Help me! Come to me some one!" A woman's voice unmistakably; unmistakably, too, the voice of a refined woman, and holding in it, to Brewster's ear—an ear curiously sensitive where voices were concerned—a strange mingling of fright and command.

"Yes," he called in reply, trying to brush away the choking cloud with impatient hands. "Hold on, I'm coming. Speak again, so that I can place you."

In answer, the haunting voice sounded once more; this time seemingly ahead, and a little to the right. "Here I am. Come at once, please!"

The imperative note was even more distinguishable, and Brewster steered toward the sound with outstretched, groping arms. In a minute he called again: "Where are you now?" and this time the response came, more faintly, from the left: "Here! Can you not find me?" its command more insistent than ever.

"For Heaven's sake!" Brewster shouted, "keep still, if you don't want me to lose you altogether. Don't move a single step, and

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call to me steadily!" His voice now held an imperative ring, and the woman evidently recognized its masterfulness, for she did as he commanded; and again Ralph plunged forward toward the intangible sweetness of the calling voice.

A London fog is almost as deceptive to ears as to eyes, and thus it happened that, before the object of his search seemed to the man's hearing close at hand, his groping hands touched something which loomed up with such suddenness out of the obscurity that a rather sharp collision was inevitable. Brewster drew back apologetically, and the girl—for it was only a girl—uttered an exclamation of indignant surprise, followed by a little ripple of inconsistent, involuntary laughter, checked as soon as born.

"Oh," she said, "I am very glad you have found me at last. What a long time you were about it! I have been lost for quite an hour in this frightful fog, and I must get home at once."

"I should have found you sooner," Brewster retorted, somewhat resentfully, for her tone suggested a condescension unbearable, under the circumstances, "but you must have moved, did you not, after I first called?"

"Of course I did," the girl replied with spirit, "I tried to come to meet you."

"Oh, that is fatal in a fog," Brewster exclaimed. "Two people drift apart at once, if they play at cross purposes like that; for, between calls, they may be moving in exactly opposite directions. The only way is to remain stationary as a——"

"Fog-horn?" the girl suggested, brightly, with a keen, quick glance at her companion. In spite of the dusky dimness in which he was partially shrouded, though close at her side, both his voice and bearing convinced her that the man was a gentleman in whom she might trust; and her manner changed a trifle, although the condescension was still slightly noticeable.

"Exactly," Brewster agreed, gravely. Then courteously—"I rather fear I am lost myself; but I may be able to be of some assistance to you. It is a frightful night for a woman to be out alone, and dangerous as well. Where do you wish to go?"

The implied disapproval of this remark seemed to sting the girl to an explanation, in spite of herself; and she began with an increased haughtiness. "To the Metropole. Surely it cannot be very far. I came out early this afternoon to the National Gallery, and while there sent my companion off on an errand. She was to return in an hour,

at four o'clock. But after I grew tired of looking at the pictures, and found the time was up, of course"—impatiently—"I could wait no longer, and so—I started home."

"But the fog—surely by that time, it must have been very thick. You should never have attempted——"

"Yes," she admitted, unwillingly, "it was thick, and it grew worse so rapidly. But—what would you?" with a pretty, oddly foreign gesture. "I could wait no longer, I knew the way, and who could have dreamed it would so soon become like this?" A shade of mischievous regret crept into her voice as she added, as if to herself, "How they will scold! Poor Nathalie! She, too, is lost, I fear. That is what kept her. I thought it could be nothing but sudden death, she grumbled so at leaving me! But," turning abruptly, "you will take me home, sir, as quickly as possible, will you not?"

"You may be sure of that," returned Ralph, again slightly nettled. Where in the world lay the charm of staying out longer than was necessary in a cold, dank fog, with this pert, self-willed school-girl, he should like to know? He asked himself the question angrily, and was surprised to find another self recognizing that, absurd as it might seem, there was a distinct charm.

"But why do we not move on, then?"

With a sudden surrender to the humor of the situation, Brewster broke into a laugh. "Move on?" he said. "Yes, we might, if we only knew in which direction to move!"

The girl watched him a minute, and then joined in. The laugh cleared the mental atmosphere, if not the material one, and Brewster asked: "How long had you been calling when I came?"

"Only a minute. I could not bear to speak sooner. I did not know who might answer, and I thought I must find my way in time—it is such a short distance, you know? I am sure I started right at first; but then, after a time, I came to such a dreadful place, all noisy men and wagons; and it was then that I became so turned around and hopelessly tangled, I suppose; for, pretty soon, I found myself here—apparently in a place where there was *nobody*. I stood it as long as I could, and then I could not bear it any longer. It was unspeakable, the loneliness! I called, and then—you answered!"

Yes, her voice was marvelously sympathetic. In its flexible changes Brewster could trace every gradation of her experience—the arrogant self-confidence of her departure; the shrinking disgust at the



PLUNGED FORWARD TOWARD THE INTANGIBLE SWEETNESS OF THE CALLING VOICE.



rough, clamoring crowd; the desperate, overmastering sensation of loneliness; and, finally, the passionate relief at his answer to her appeal. The hint of this last feeling thrilled him swiftly, and he felt all at once an immeasurable desire and capacity to move mountains, in order that this delicate, high-bred girl beside him might walk unobstructed henceforth. Unfortunately, no mountains were at hand, only the fog, grim, relentless, omnipresent—like a melodramatic ghost—the clutch of whose clammy fingers no power other than the elements could shake off.

But her words gave him a clue. "I say!" he exclaimed, gladly, "See here! You must have been wandering about in a

circle around the square! That would account for there being so few people! If *that's* the case, we'll soon find our bearings. Yes—I started out from the Oxford and Cambridge Club fifteen minutes or so ago; and, so far as I can make out, I've been heading east ever since. Walking rather slowly, that ought to bring me, by now, just about to Trafalgar Square."

"Nonsense!" his companion declared, "I could hardly be so stupid as to walk around in a circle. It is unreasonable!"

"Oh, but I assure you, it's not unreasonable in the least," Brewster protested. "It's what every inexperienced person does when lost. It's the most natural thing in the world. We'll move forward slowly; and, if I'm right, as I begin to think I must be, we'll soon strike something that will prove it."

Move forward, accordingly, they did—cautiously, for the fog was like a dense wall, behind which no fate seemed too subtle or fearsome to lurk. And sure enough, before long they did meet "a lion in the path"—a Landseer lion—by which token Brewster knew, at once, that Nelson's

column was at hand, a vantage point from which to base further calculations.

"Here we are!" he exclaimed, joyfully. "This is better luck than I dared hope for. If we had struck any of these other old duffers, whose pedestals are alike as peas, it would have been as complicated as the highest sort of mathematics. As it is, the problem's simple as A B C!"

"I do not really see that we are so much better off than before," the girl answered, with a sort of triumphant willfulness. "As I remember it, there are four lions, are there not? And consequently four sides to Nelson's column. How do you know which side this is, then? It seems to me that there are just three chances to one against our





"... out of the way of the uncouth and mammoth thing."

starting out in the right direction from here!"

"Then it's simply a case of 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again,'" Ralph retorted, with rising good humor. "This is my plan. The column is in the center of the square, *east and west*; but it is very near to the curb on the *south* side; while the *southeast* lion—if my architectural head doesn't play me false—points directly

toward Northumberland Avenue, which, as you know, is the street we're after. So you see, all we have to do is to start straight ahead, from the side we're on, and walk about twenty paces. Then, if we don't come to the curb, do as the King of France did, 'March back again,' and begin all over from another side, until we do strike it—do you see?"

Yes, she saw, with a quick grasp of his points that delighted Brewster, as did, still more, the girlish gusto and abandon with which she entered into the whole thing. He grasped one end of her slim little umbrella, telling her to hold to the crook behind him; while he made wild lunges ahead with his cane, because, as he said, "you never can tell what *lusus nature* you may meet with at any minute in a London fog!" They both shuddered at the thought of the way she might have pitched headlong down the steps that connect the curious stone terraces of Trafalgar Square.

In the heat of this discussion, during the second voyage of exploration from the column, they lost count of their steps, and, before they knew it, were confronted with a pedestal, which Brewster declared must be that of General Gordon, who had embraced the opportunity of the fog to move up and hob-nob with Nelson, since it had surely never been so close before. They faced about, and he made for the column again, in secret perturbation lest they had been turned about and bumped into one of the other statues—in which case their friendly vantage-point would not be forthcoming—but was relieved to find he was right, and there had been no more serious mistake than in the extra number of steps they had taken.

Out again for the third time. Ralph felt as if they were two children, playing at nothing more responsible or arduous than a game of Blind Man's Buff; and when, at the fourth venture, they finally found the long-lost curb (with a unanimous exclamation, in which triumph and regret were ridiculously blended), the man had a keen sensation that they



might claim to be old, old friends by this time, as becomes those who have grown up together through a long, happy youth.

Back, for the last time, to the column steps, to the left of which (facing the curb) crouches the "southeast lion," gazing with stony eyes down Northumberland Avenue. "Good for Nelson!" ejaculated Brewster. "To have beaten Napoleon's fleet was nowhere beside overcoming a London fog!" And the girl laughed merrily, "He has always been one of my heroes. I shall appreciate him more than ever after this!"

When they started slowly on again, she asked, gently, as if touched by his patient persistence and clever planning: "I hope I'm not taking you greatly out of your way? It would be such a pity;" and Brewster answered with a joyous ring in his voice: "Not in the least. Why, we are close neighbors. Isn't it odd? I am staying at the Victoria, right next to you. You see it was the very luckiest thing in the world, my running across you. I should never have gotten my own bearings without your hints."

"How good you are to put it so. I think the indebtedness is all on my side—I *was* foolish!" she admitted, with a degree of mental surprise at the concession which would have amazed Ralph Brewster, simply because he could not have comprehended it. To him owning to a fault was the most natural and immediate outcome of its recognition. "But who could have dreamed of this!" she went on. "Oh, what a country, this England of yours! It would kill me; I could not breathe in it! Faugh!"

"But it is not *my* England," Brewster answered, laughing at the vivid disdain of her voice. "I'm an American, you know? And that accounts for my stupidity in dealing with this sort of thing. If I'd been a Britisher, I should have had you home long ago, I dare say." He ended with a mental reservation, "Thank Heaven, I'm not, then!" which, if revealed, might, in turn, have been a surprise to his companion.



"Good-by, my friend. I thank you—always."

She looked up, interestedly. "America?" she said. "I might have known it. But why were you so surprised, then? I thought it was the custom, over there, for women to do exactly as they pleased; to go out and about alone and unprotected at any hour. Oh, how I have longed for the freedom of it all at times!" she ended, with a note of weariness that caught Brewster's quick ear.

"You are then——?"

"I am a German," she answered, with a sort of finality that, somehow, checked the further questioning which rose to Ralph's lips.

As they reached the street on which the Metropole stands, a huge dray lumbered up suddenly out of the blackness behind; and, with a quick backward motion of his arm, trained years before to pull stroke on his 'Varsity eight, Ralph caught the girl from her feet, and lifted her around in front of him, out of the way of the uncouth and mammoth thing. When they moved on again, he reached out and drew her arm up through his, holding it firmly to his side, while around them—all around them—the blessed, the kindly fog shut down again, separating them from the rest of the world, leaving him in a new world of his own, with this one woman, in whose presence he was conscious of a restfulness that was akin to nothing, perhaps, so much as the glad surprise of quiet, deep, harbored waters after a stormy uncertainty.

And now, for a while, they did not speak at all; but Brewster knew, by a sort of sixth sense, that her silence held no estrangement. They moved on as if in a dream. Was it indeed anything else? The isolation; the unreality of past or future, of anything but the intense, all-sufficing present; the complete disconnection with any fellowship beyond the limitless one of the other dream-figure at his side—that figure so vital and real where it touched him closely, but fading itself, at the farther points, into unsubstantiality. Where but in a dream could one find such conditions?

Just before they reached the hotel the girl turned, pointing to a light which flashed by them only to be swallowed up, the next instant, into nothingness again. "What are those," she said, "those lights? I have noticed them, at intervals, ever since we started."

A sudden temptation rose in Brewster's heart, grappled with his speech, and was worsted. He had yielded tacitly to one already, but he would at least be honest with her now. There was a dread, however, in his eyes as he looked down at her. "Those are the link-boys," he said, seriously.

"The link-boys?" she repeated, questioningly.

"Yes, the link-boys," he continued, unsparingly, "the men who carry about lighted torches, and make it their business to find people who are lost in the London fogs, and show them to their destination." Unconsciously he was repeating the phrase-

ology of a London guide-book, but his eyes held hers as he spoke.

"Then you—when you—when we, were lost——" she faltered, "you might—all the time you might——"

"Yes, I might have hailed one, and he would have led us home in half the time," Ralph blurted out. "It was caddish—it was dishonorable in me; but I—forgive me—I——"

He stopped, for he felt rather than saw that his companion was smiling. "It was better so," she said, with a sweet, light graciousness. "It was most thoughtful. I should so much have preferred you to bring me home quietly like this, than to have come in—how do you say it?—a 'torch-light procession!'"

In another instant they had reached the entrance; and, with his swift return to everydayness, Brewster found his exalted sensations replaced by the most lusty and prosaic hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness.

The girl drew her arm from his with a quick determination and lifted her face. As she did so and he saw it clearly, for the first time, in the subdued glare, the man was struck with its expression—a sort of hopeless weariness, inconsistent with its youth and extreme fairness.

"No, do not come any further," she said, gently, when he made as if to accompany her up the steps. "Please! I do not wish it. It only remains for me to thank you. Indeed I do thank you," she continued, hesitatingly, but with a deeper note, which lent a new gravity and dignity to her beautiful voice. "You have spared me great trouble, and you—saved my life, I think, that time when—when the wagon—— I am glad to owe my life to you. I am glad to have known you. I wish I too—I too—had been born in America. Will you not tell me your name, that I may remember my good friend?"

Brewster fumbled eagerly in his pocket, and handed her his card. "It was nothing—it was everything—I mean I am so glad——" he murmured, confusedly, for the happiness her words gave him impeded speech—"so glad to have been of the least service."

They were standing at the foot of the hotel steps, a little to the side, where she had stopped him. People were jostling by them, in and out of the warm, brilliantly lighted hall-way beyond, against the brightness of which her slender figure was silhouetted tenderly, her hair making a soft

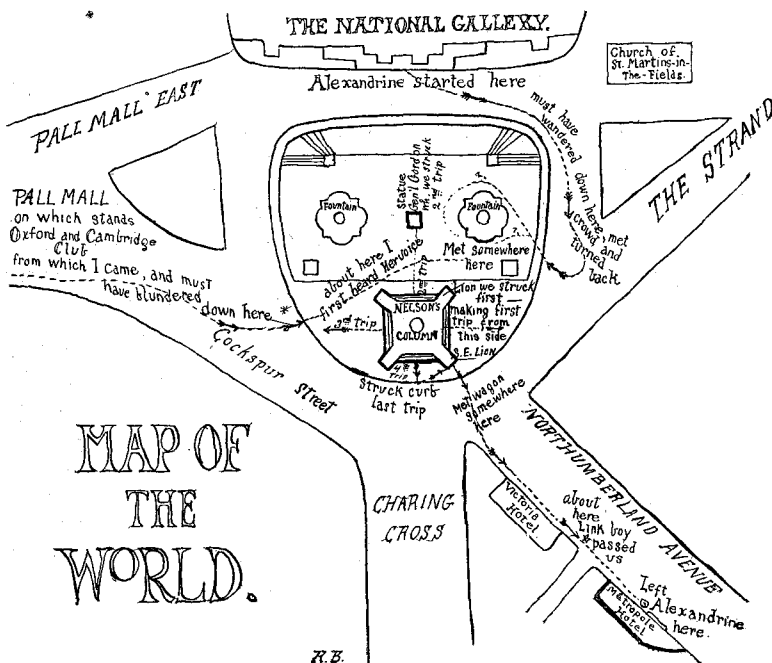


halo about her shadowed face. Behind them lay the fog, in the sphinx-like depths of which the man fancied that he had found an answer to the riddle of his life. He held out both hands. "Your name?" he said, disconnectedly. "This is only *auf wiedersehen*—I must see you again. I—"

The girl seemed surprised at the impetuous gesture, but the next instant she laid

him, he would make no plans. And, forthwith, he set to work at that most tempting architecture in the world, castle-building! How it all haunted him—every turn of her head, every intonation of her voice. Why, his impression of the girl was as vivid as if he had known her all his life, as indeed he had, he told himself, convincingly, for life had only begun with him from the moment he heard that calling voice.

Alexandrine! How perfectly it suited her! The beginning of it, stately and imperious, with the tender, playful diminutive ending; the whole name full of dignity and strength, and yet so womanly! Henneborough! Ah, that was not so good! Too German perhaps—an American name would be better. He laughed at himself again, for his own eager boyishness; glad of his youth; glad of his wealth and good



her hand confidently in his eager ones. Then she straightened, and drew them gently away. Her words came softly. "My name is Alexandrine Henneborough. Good-by, my friend. I thank you—always!" she said; and then was gone up the steps.

For a minute or two he stood where she had left him, gazing stupidly after her. Then he pulled himself together with a short, happy laugh, and turning, groped his way back, through the fog, to his own hotel. Arrived there, and in the friendly seclusion of his own room, he paced up and down in a sort of exaltation. His passage had been engaged for the following Saturday, but he had thought of that as he came in, and had wired from the hotel office, giving up his state-room. How he exulted now to think how completely he was his own master, appreciating the good fortune of his singular aloneness as never before. What was to hinder if he chose to follow his fog-maiden, his will-o'-the-wisp, through all the world! Plans? Her plans should be his. As for

name, that he might use them all as helps in winning her. He must be patient, oh, yes, and circumspect, and not let her dream at first, or frighten her by the suddenness of it all. He would invent excuses; he would employ Machiavellian adroitness in explaining his presence, his behavior. Yes, he would be patient. To-morrow, he would wait to present himself till afternoon. He would leave her the whole morning free. A morning? A month rather! But he would leave it to her, free. In the afternoon, at four, or probably three—possibly at two—he would call—and so on, and so on, till far into the morning which he had so generously resolved to abnegate.

Accordingly, the next day, he killed time in numerous ways. He read the newspaper, and then caught himself wondering what the deuce there was in it anyway. Then he took a piece of paper, and grew intensely absorbed over a rough map of their journeyings in the fog the night before, living every step of the way over again. "But, oh, there is

another crime I haven't mentioned yet!" he quoted, under his breath, when he came to Nelson's column. "I stole that third trip, my lady! I wonder if it occurred to you that General Gordon could have directed us, without the extra excursion!" He labeled the plan "Map of the World," and then tucked it tenderly away in his wallet, smiling to himself as he speculated how long it would be before he would dare to tell her about it, to show it to her!

After this, he dressed with more care and temper than he had ever before expended, fuming at his man, and then sending him out of the room, the proud and forgiving possessor of an all but brand-new suit of clothes and a top-coat. Subsequently, he made his way over to Hyde Park, where he strode up and down the Row in the mellow October sunshine, whose hazy quality was the sole legacy of yesterday's fog.

As he walked there, in the soft, kindly air, watching the people with an amiable benevolence and universal overflowing good-will toward men, which he himself would have described as "doting," there was a sudden stir, and then an open carriage came bowling rapidly along—a very fine carriage; in fact, a most noticeable carriage, with a curiously familiar coat-of-arms on paneling and trappings. As it came toward him Brewster recognized the Princess of Wales, who sat on the back seat, beside a very stately old individual, whose breast so glittered with insignia that one naturally inferred he must be a very important individual

indeed. Then, as they flashed quickly past, the face of a girl on the front seat, with her back to the horses, arrested his carelessly interested eye, and—burned itself into his inner consciousness! A girl with a slender, beautifully clad figure; with a cloud of light, wind-blown hair, and a small flower-like face, on which was stamped the expression of bored weariness which Ralph had noticed once in the eyes of his fog-maiden of the night before.

Just at that instant she caught sight of the man leaning forward, breathlessly, from the fringe of pedestrians. The bored look vanished, and a sudden, brilliant flush swept across her face for a second, and left it tense and paler than before, as she bent forward over the side of the carriage with an indescribably pathetic gesture of recognition.

Brewster had just sense enough left to remain uncovered until they had disappeared; but his own face was white as he turned to a gentlemanly-looking Englishman who stood beside him, and asked, unsteadily, "Can you tell me the name of that lady on the front seat of the carriage which has just passed?"

The Englishman looked with a slow curiosity into the eager, questioning eyes (which he afterwards decided belonged to one of those "aristocracy-worshippers from the other side"). Then good-naturedly, and with a keen relish himself of the titled morsel under his tongue, "Isn't she beautiful?" he said. "Didn't you recognize her? Why, that was Her Serene Highness, Alexandrine, Princess of Saxe-Weissenach and Countess of Hennebourg!"

FINIS.





# THE LINER AND THE ICEBERG.

BY CUTCLIFFE HYNÉ,

Author of "Honor of Thieves," "The Paradise Coal-boat," etc.



CAPTAIN KETTLE had been thanking Carnforth for getting him command of the Atlantic liner "Armenia." "But," he went on, "qualifications, sir, are all my eye. Interest's the thing that shoves a ship-master along. Yes, Mr. Carnforth, interest and luck. I've got qualifications by the fathom, and you know pretty well what they've ever done for me. But you're a rich man and an M. P.; you've got interest; you come up and give me a good word with an owner, and look, the thing's done."

"Well, I sincerely wish you a long reign," said Carnforth. "The 'Armenia's' the slowest and oldest ship on the line, but she was the best I could get the firm to give you. It's seldom they change their captains, and they promote from the bottom, upwards. You've got all the line before you, Kettle, and the rest must depend on yourself. I'd sincerely like to see you commodore of the firm's fleet, but you'll have to do the climbing to that berth by your own wit. I've done all I can."

"You've done more for me, sir, than any other creature living's done, and believe me, then, a very grateful fellow. And you can bet I shall do my best to stick to a snug berth now I've got it. I'm a married man, Mr. Carnforth, with children; I've them always at the back of my memory; and I've known what it is to try all the wretched jobs that the knock-about ship-master's put to if he doesn't choose his belongings to starve. The only thing I've got to be frightened of now is luck, and that's a thing which is outside my hands, and outside yours, and outside the hands of everyone else on this earth. I guess that God above keeps the engineering of luck as His own private department; and He deals it out according to His good pleasure; and we get what's best for us."

Now the steamship "Armenia," or old "Atrocity," as she was more familiarly

named, with other qualifying adjectives according to taste, was more known than respected in the Western Ocean passenger trade. In her day she had been a flier, and had cut a record; but her day was past. Ship-building and engine-building are for ever on the improve, and, with competition, and the rush of trade, the older vessels are constantly getting outclassed in speed and economy.

So heavy stoke-hold crews and extravagant coal consumption no longer made the "Armenia" tremble along at her topmost speed. The firm had built new and faster boats to do the showy trips which got spoken about in the newspapers; and in these they carried the actresses, and the drummers, and the other people who run up heavy wine bills and insist on expensive state-rooms; and they had lengthened the "Armenia's" scheduled time of passage between ports to what was most economical for coal consumption, and made her other arrangements to match. They advertised first-class bookings from Liverpool to New York for eleven pounds and upwards, and passengers who economised and bought eleven-pound tickets, fondly imagining that they were going to cross in one of the show boats, were wont to find themselves consigned to berths in inside cabins on the "Armenia."

The present writer (before Captain Kettle took over command) knew the "Armenia" well. A certain class of passengers had grown native to her. On outward trips she was a favorite boat for Mormon missionaries and their converts. The saints themselves voyaged first-class, and made a very nasty exhibition of manners; their wives were in the second cabin; and the ruck of the converts—Poles, Slavs, Armenians, and other noisome riff-raff—reposed in stuffy barracks far below the water-line, and got the best that could be given them for their contract transport price of three-pound-ten a head. Besides the Mormons (and shunning them as oil does water), there were civilized passengers who shipped by the "Armenia" either because the cheap tariff suited their purses,

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