

# SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE

VOL. XLIX

FEBRUARY, 1911

NO. 2

## THE HARBOR

By Walter Prichard Eaton

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WALTER KING STONE



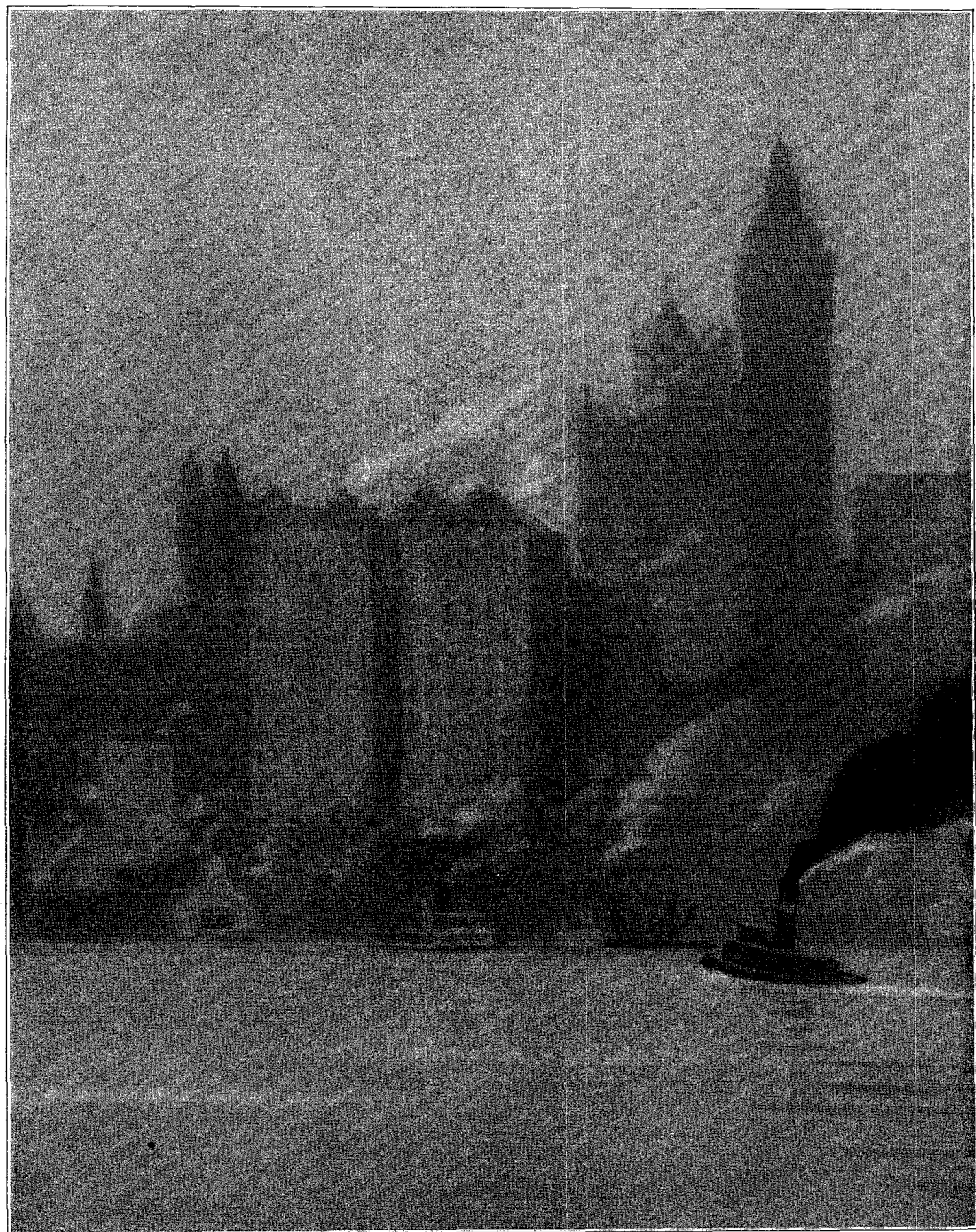
SINCE man first went down to the sea in ships, harbors have been his care, his protection, his delight. Where lonely sea meets barren shore, where the land pushes out a lean finger into the blue or buffets the breakers with a granite fist, the eye may rejoice and the spirit grow lyrical. But it is the sheltered harbor, where the great ships come in to lay their sea-borne burdens at the city's feet, which is the real portal to the ocean road; and at that portal man finds most delight of the deep, because he seems there at once its master and under the spell of its mystery. He sees his patient tugs at work, his long docks laden with freight, his city coming down expectant to the water's edge: and he sees, too, the battered tramps steaming up from under the world rim, the liners going out on their far voyaging. He scents together the odor of the town and the racy salt of the sea. He is aware alike of familiar things and strange. We cease soon enough to greet with fresh wonder the sight of a city, and the unlimited ocean may grow for many of us monotonous or sad. But the harbor is a perpetual wonder and daily a new delight.

There are many harbors intrinsically more beautiful than that of New York, but few more interesting and none more busy. The elderly Southern visitor from Shreveport, La., who refused to utter any expressions of astonishment at the subway crowds, the East River bridges, the electric illuminations on the Rialto, the multitudinous sky-scrapers, but who stood upon the

Battery sea-wall for a time watching the harbor, and then exclaimed with deep feeling, "This sure is the Shrevepo't o' the No'th, sah!" aptly expressed the commercial importance of New York Harbor. But he did not express its peculiar acquired beauty; he could not, for he did not know it well enough. You cannot learn to know New York Harbor from the sea-wall of the Battery. You must view it at all times, from all points and angles, before its multitudinous and ever-changing delights grow into an impression of beauty so strong and so memorable that it can never fade, so strong, indeed, that you will love this smudgy bay almost above all others, finding them tame, or even colorless, by comparison.

New York Harbor is divided by The Narrows, that channel passage between Staten Island and Brooklyn, into two bays, the Upper and the Lower, much like a huge dumb-bell, save that the Lower Bay is the larger, extending south from Quarantine to Sandy Hook, west to Raritan Bay, and merging eastward with the open Atlantic. The great volume of the Hudson, pouring past Manhattan Island, through the Upper Bay and The Narrows, deposits its load of soil in this Lower Bay, where red buoys mark the difficult channel and the larger liners sometimes go aground in the fog. It is seventeen miles as the crow flies from the New York City Hall to Sandy Hook Light. It is only six miles to St. George, Staten Island, which marks the head of The Narrows. The Upper Bay, or harbor proper, is thus far removed from the open sea. It is almost a lake, some

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Its dominant note of power is that Andean pile of

five miles on either diameter, made by the confluence of the Hudson and East Rivers. Within its area, and in the rivers on either side of that long, narrow strip of dividing rock called Manhattan Island, half the water commerce of a continent is con-

ducted; and over it on ferry-boats or under it in steel and concrete tubes daily pass so many thousands of people that the head is dizzy reckoning their number. At the head of it rises that Andean range of sky-scrapers on the southern nose of Man-



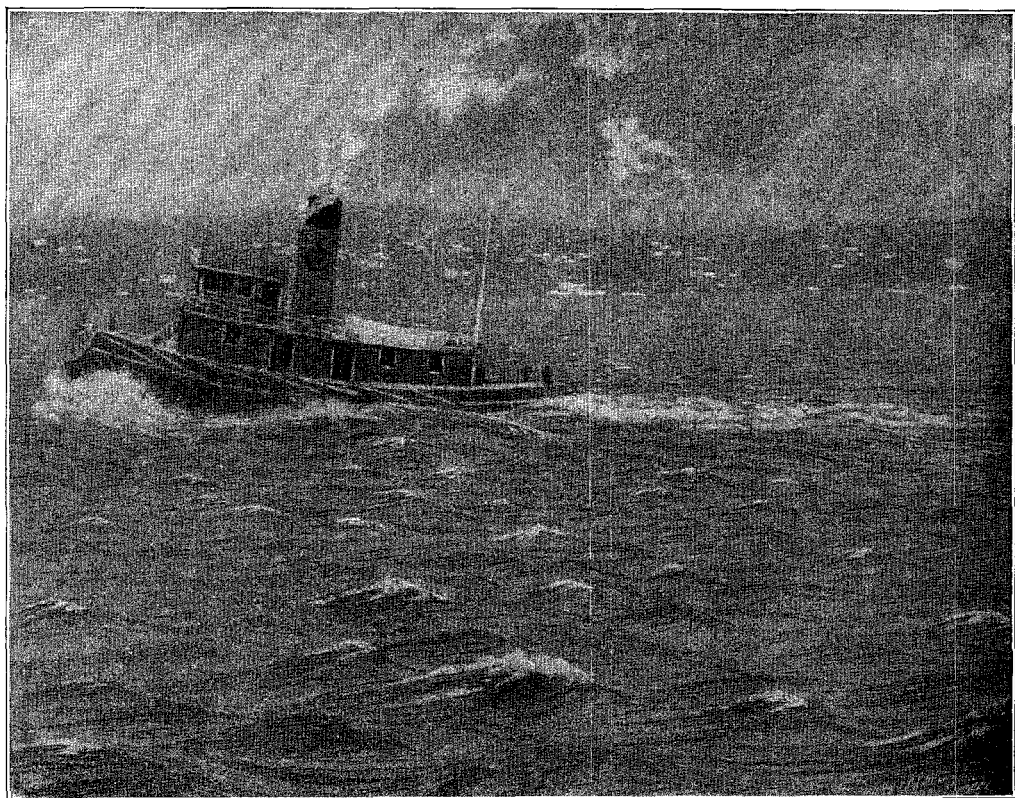


sky-scrapers which rises at its head.—Page 132.

hattan, man's mightiest material accomplishment since the Pyramids. Over it drifts the smoke from a myriad chimneys on the shore, a myriad funnels on the water. Yet the sea fog works up through The Narrows with the smell of brine; a

coast schooner beats in under dirty canvas, with a broken wing, perhaps, from some wild gale off Hatteras; the brilliant sun flashes from a gull's breast and the steel-gray, dancing waves—and the call of the deep comes over you. Your eye





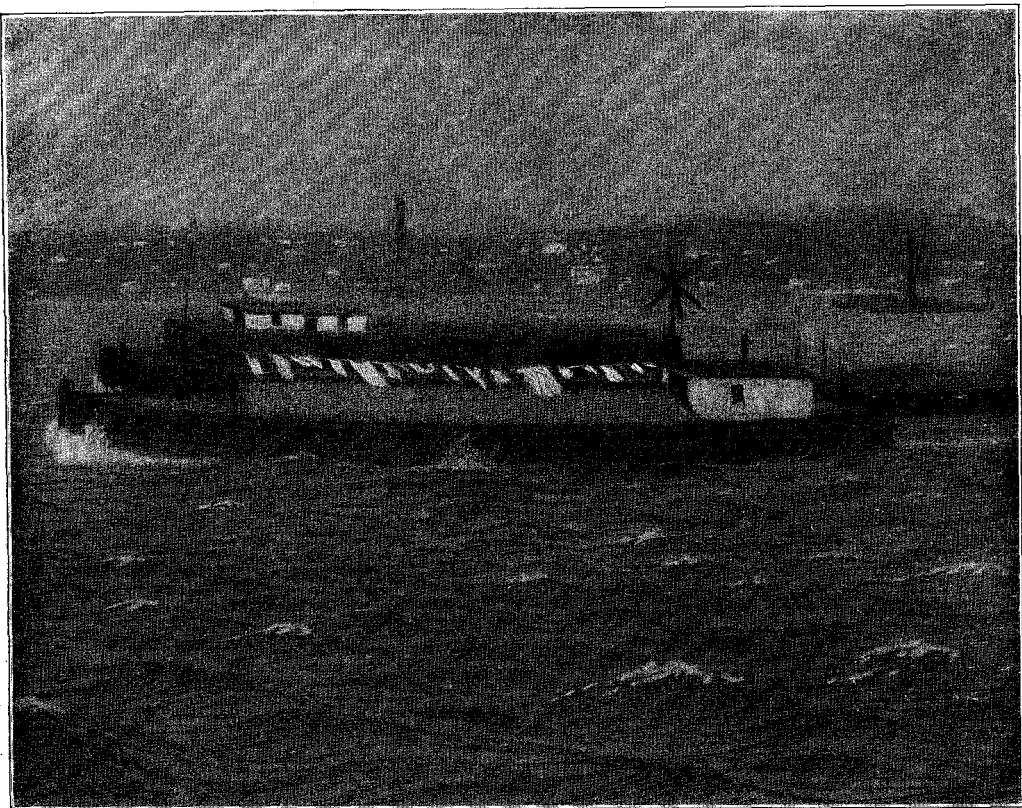
A tug goes past in a keen, off-shore wind, tow-

and your heart follow that steamer dropping down channel with the tide. You feel, as the wash of the liner gently jiggles your ferry-boat, the heave and swing of the long Atlantic rollers. The harbor asks its toll of dreams from those who cross upon it. As little Will o' the Mill stood upon his hill-top and looked down into the plain to the far city, his eyes big with wistfulness, so you may see the army of those who "commute," leaving their day's toil in town, stand on the deck of the ferry-boats at night and look through The Narrows down the ocean road, the ancient call of the sea not yet silent in their hearts, that siren call of freedom and adventure.

What gives to New York Harbor its unique aspect, of course, and its dominant note of power, is that Andean pile of skyscrapers which rises at its head, crowned by the peak of the Singer Tower and flanked by the leaping spans of two great suspension bridges. To the voyager coming up the bay, after his ship has slipped

through The Narrows, past the two forts, and under the green hills of Staten Island, this mountain range seems to rise like mortared Sierras out of the sea, hazed with smoke and blue with distance. As he draws nearer and the buildings take separate form, their tiers of windows proclaiming their incredible height, his first impression of New York, of the New World, is that of an architectural miracle, a Babylonian dream. A first impression is seldom a last; but though the wonder of these buildings soon wears off for those who fly up and down in their elevators or dash about in the canyon slits between them, and their beauty is converted to ugliness when they cannot be viewed as a group, for him who views them from the harbor or the opposite shores their spell of wonder never grows less, their beauty never vanishes. Viewed as a part of the harbor, as its great head wall, as the crown of the picture, they are sometimes of ethereal lightness, sometimes of Dantean strength and massiveness, but always beautiful.





ing a brace of inland canal-boats.—Page 134.

And their aspect over the harbor is never twice the same, from day to day, from hour to hour, nor the same from any two points of sight. If you take a Thirty-ninth Street, Brooklyn, ferry from the Battery, passing through Buttermilk Channel where the long docks face across to Governor's Island, you may look back presently and see the green parade-ground like a lawn at the feet of the sky-scrapers; the intervening water is quite concealed. To one side of you is the Erie Basin, filled with the steamers of all nations, like a corral of strange sea-cattle; to the other side the sailing-ships lie at anchor, between you and the main channel. Behind, leaping up apparently out of a green lawn, are the peaks of lower Manhattan, flying their flags and their white steam-plumes gayly against the blue. That is when the light is clear and sharp. On such a morning you might have stood upon a dock in Jersey City and seen the sun rise behind the long range of towered buildings, transfiguring them.

On such a morning they stand in sharp silhouette against the dawn sky, their separate peaks distinct, their bases a blurred mass. They are painted in the flat. Then the sun comes up. Through the cross streets it shoots level rays. Down amid the caves and canyons these rays pierce, touching cornices and windows with gold and bringing out as if by magic the third dimension of the picture. Up against the new-washed sky the smoke plumes grow rosy. Tall building casts shadows upon tall building, mutually supplying the solidity which the isolated steel-frame structure, with its mere shell of stone, cannot suggest: and as the sun itself at last appears above them the whole river seems suddenly to wake to life, and to pour its commerce round the city's feet.

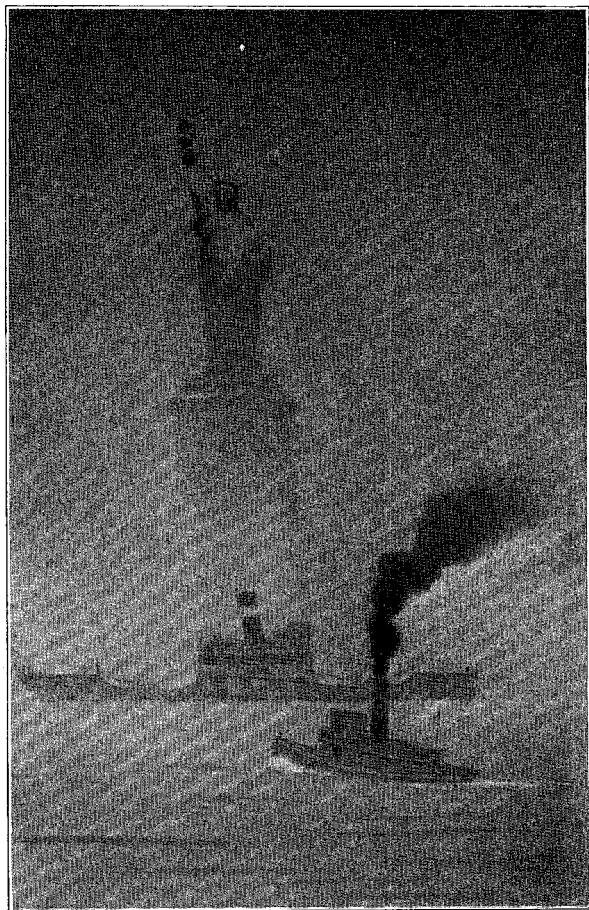
It is seldom, however, save at early morning or on a Sunday, that the atmosphere about these mortared mountains is free from smoke or haze. When once the city and the harbor have awaked, an aerial

gauze is spread over the lower island and the high buildings but loom the larger through it, with deeper shadows or softer outlines or lovelier colors. There are steel-

red stacks of the liners at their piers are gaudy spots of color, and usually some tug trails a gigantic feather of velvety black smoke across the picture. There are days

of lowering rain and mist, when the Singer Tower goes out of sight in the clouds and the city, from the harbor, becomes almost unbelievable, while the screeching whistles take on a terrifying tone. There are days, too, of copper sunsets over the low-lying Jersey shore, when, from the water, you see tier after tier of windows on Manhattan turn to molten fire, and from up the darkening river come sudden flashes of copper flame from the windows of the ferry-boats.

With the coming of early night in winter, all the tiers of windows up the cliff walls of the sky-scrapers become checks of gold. As darkness deepens and the outlines of the buildings grow more indistinct, the Singer Tower, bathed in the white glow of its invisible searchlights, seems a strange snow-capped peak lording it over the lesser heights, and the wake of your ferry-boat on the water is a purple lane stretching back to the land of wonder. When the outlines of the buildings have completely disappeared, the innumerable window lights are the street lamps of a city running up a great hill,



If the day is foggy . . . Liberty looms large and ghostly behind them.—Page 135.

gray days, when the sun is overcast and a wind is up; and the white-caps on the harbor, the steam plumes from the buildings, the foam-fleck in the wake of tugs and ferry-boats, are spatters of china-white on a monochromatic picture. There are Japanese days, when a thin sea fog is in, though the sun is bright and cheerful. Then the harbor, the sky, and the city are but three delicately differentiated shades of the same blue, and the great buildings loom remote and ethereal, once more painted in two dimensions. On such a day the gay flags whipping out high aloft and the

as if New York were built on a mountain side, and the white tower, instead of appearing suspended in midair, seems to crown this eminence. Now, looking away from the city, you see the ferry-boats, with their rows of windows each with a light twinkling through it, moving over the water like animated birthday cakes.

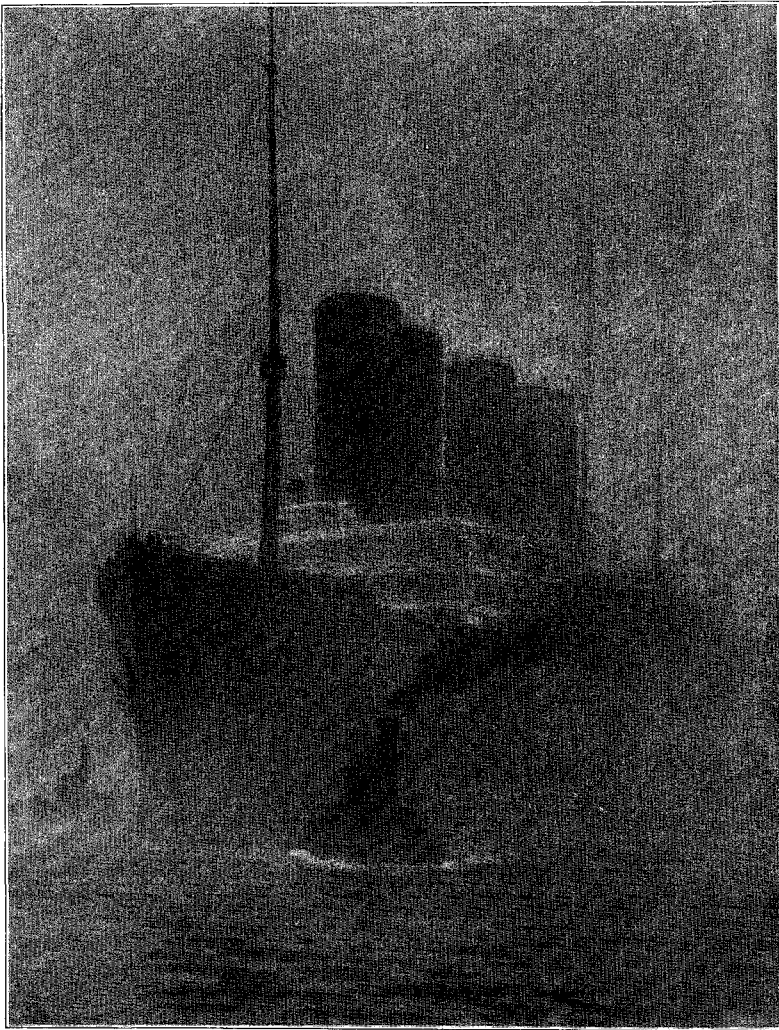
By day or night, the humble voyage to Staten Island is a perpetual delight. By day, it may be, a tug goes past in a keen, off-shore wind, towing a brace of inland canal-boats. These barges flaunt an independent life of their own under the very



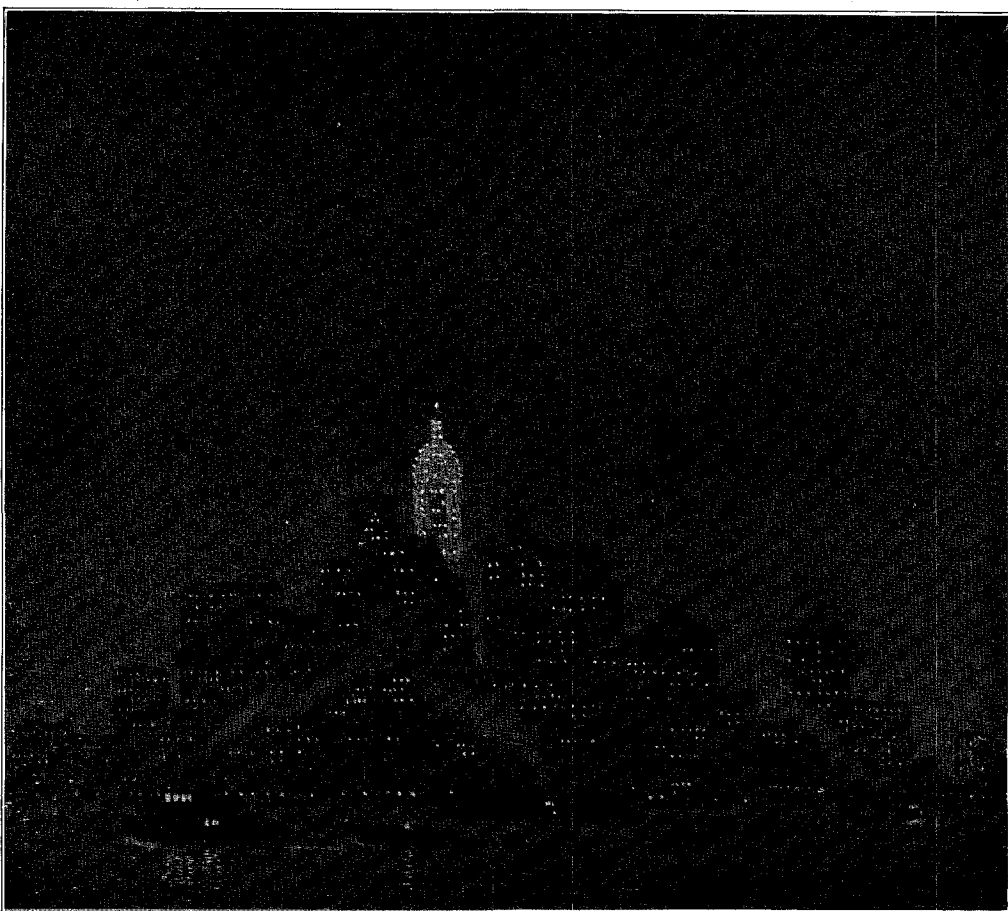
nose of New York. Geraniums bloom by the tiller, the domestic linen is flapping on a line, a face glances up at you from the cabin door with only the mildest interest. What has the slow, peaceful, nerveless life of canals to do with this great town and panting tug and white-capped, racing bay? The tug, almost as if it were aware of the incongruity, as if it were caught associating with a country cousin, pushes on hastily, warned by the hoarse, rattling, bass bellow of a liner coming down the channel. The liner goes past without a sound save the occasional roar of her whistle, her passengers high above you hanging over the rail

and looking back at New York. But in the anchorage west of the channel, from the Statue of Liberty on, the rusty tramp ships point into the tide without life or motion, wearily resting. If the day is foggy, they cut black against the vast gray blank of sky and water, the sooty laborers of the deep, and Liberty looms large and ghostly behind them.

On such a day of fog, too, when the city might be a hundred miles away, it often happens that in half the circumference of the horizon nothing will cut against the pale blue or the gray immensity but a single tug, sending up a gigantic mushroom



You may sometimes greet a monster liner coming up from Quarantine. . . . Her towering prow and lofty stacks are visible, her stern is lost in the mystery.—Page 136.



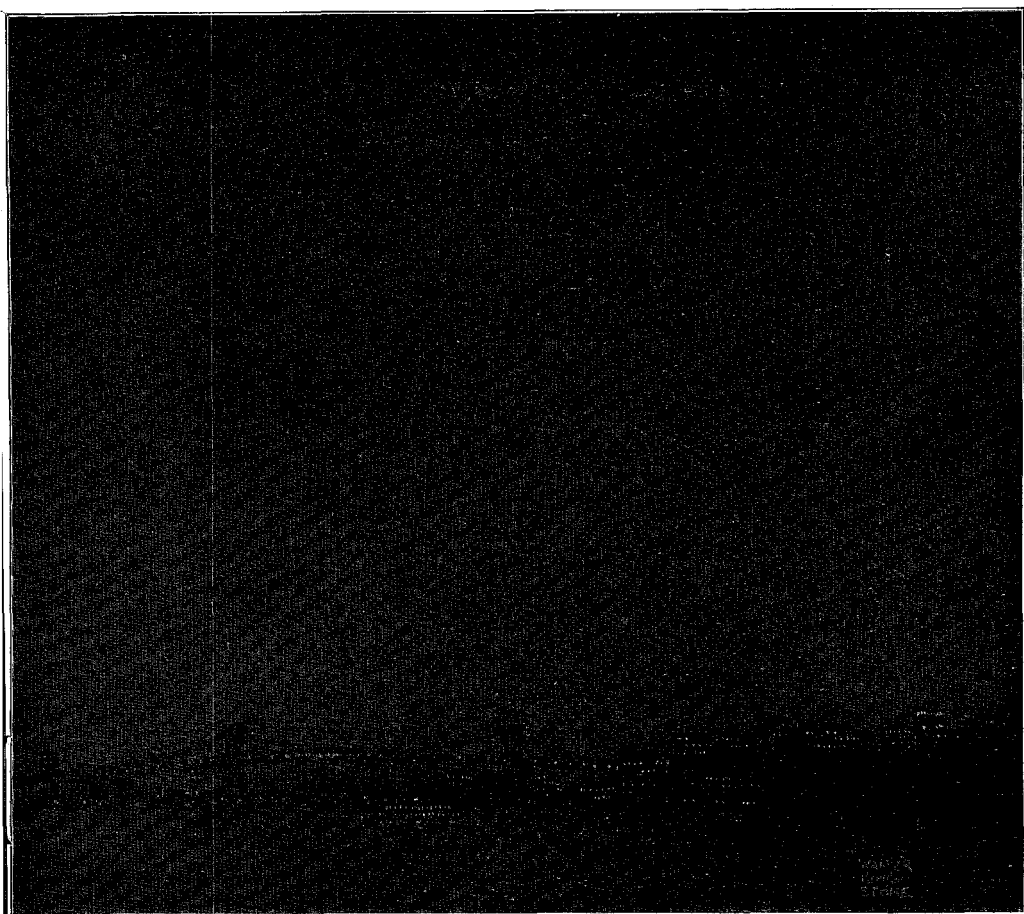
Behind you the Singer Tower raises its shaft of pale light, and the trains

of smoke which moves along with the boat as if its stem were stuck fast in the funnel, and tones so softly into the mist that the brush of a Corot might have painted it. In the fog, indeed, there is the constant excitement of sudden, unexpected picture, or sharp meetings with sea fellows. Warned in advance by the bellow of her whistle, you may sometimes greet a monster liner coming up from Quarantine, which she was able to reach before the fog bank caught her, to hold her till morning anchored outside the Hook. A pigmy tug runs on ahead, like a little dog, and even when her towering prow and lofty stacks are visible, her stern is lost in the mystery. When all the fabulous length of her has slipped past, her decks crowded with men and women peering cityward, and when the deafening vibration of her whistle has grown fainter,

you hear on your own starboard bow the mournful fog-bell off St. George, and see emerge through the mist the humble wharves of Staten Island.

Across the Kill von Kull, at Bayonne, is a smelter chimney several hundred feet tall, which pours out a perpetual stream of pale, yellowish smoke. When the wind is west, this smoke drifts directly over Staten Island. One afternoon, as the ferry-boat approached the slip, I saw the sun piercing down through this haze, carrying the shadow of St. George Hill darkly over the water to the east as far as the government anchorage, and there striking full upon a gray battle-ship and her collier. It was ridiculously as if a spot-light in the second balcony of a smoky theatre were directed upon the star performer on the stage; yet it was all on so vast a scale that you bowed



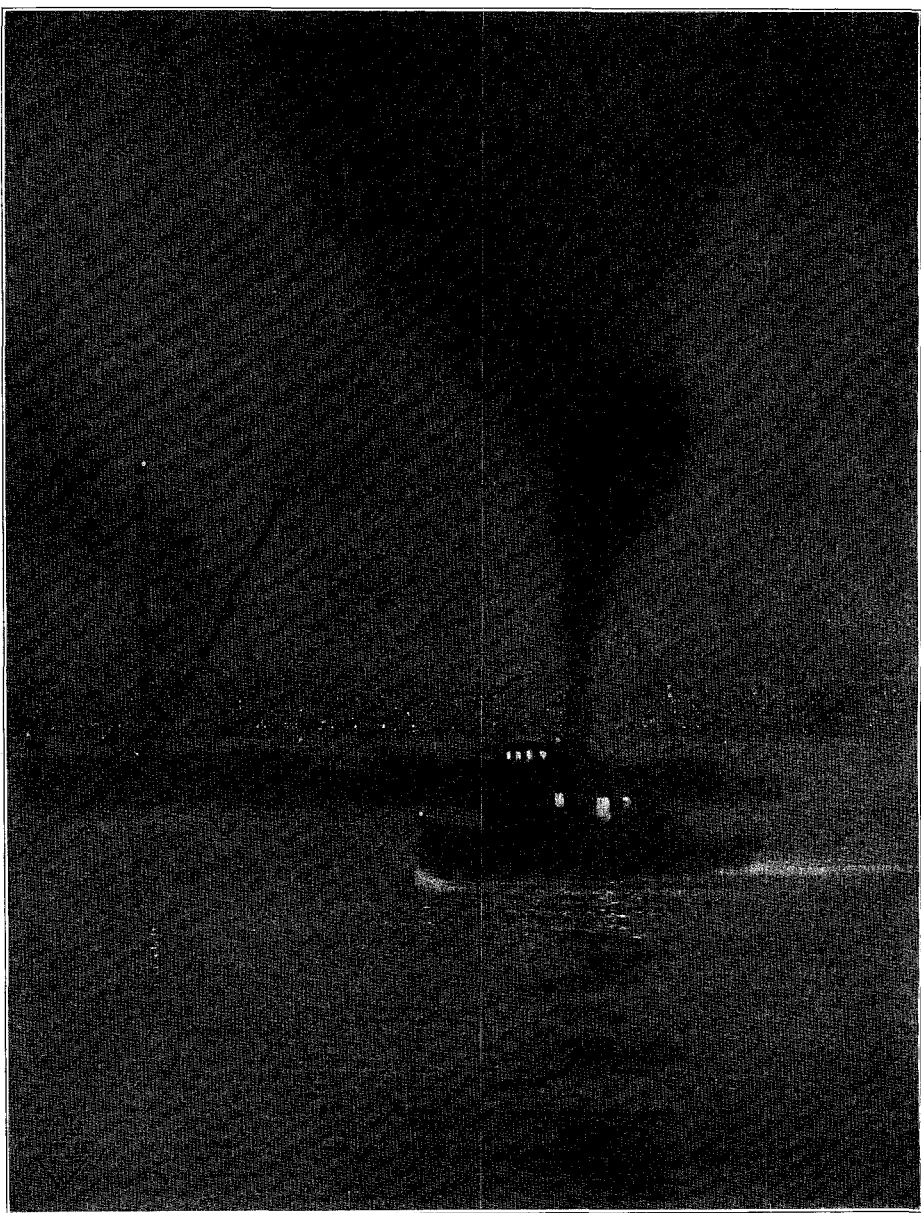


crawl like glow-worms over the high-flung web of Brooklyn Bridge.—Page 140.

in admiration. The grim iron hulk of the fighter seemed almost self-consciously aware of the dramatic effect. There is something a bit theatric about an ironclad always. This one was, for the space of several minutes, the centre of every gaze on the ferry-boat. Here for once, at least, the implication of sex we have placed upon ships seemed amply justified!

Just below Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island is South Beach, and there on a clear day you may look across the yellow sand and the strip of bright blue water in The Narrows to the green shore of Brooklyn, while to your right, beyond the two piles of red brick buildings on the Quarantine islands, the Lower Bay stretches out to open sea. New York is invisible somewhere back to the left, and this narrow strip of vivid blue is the ocean road leading

from her gates. As you sit in the warm sand, watching the white yawls skim back and forth or a three-master beat in against wind and tide, you suddenly see a red prow push out from behind the rampart of Fort Wadsworth. Silently, without smoke or churn, as if she were drawn along by an invisible wire, the steamer passes you close by, swings toward the Ambrose Channel, and heads for the open sea. Then another comes, and another. Red stacks or yellow or black, German or British or French flags (and only too infrequently the Stars and Stripes), proclaim the ships of this transatlantic line or that. Some of the smaller vessels are coasters or deep-sea tramps. That great black hulk with four red stacks, which hides half the Brooklyn shore, is the *Mauretania*. The day's exit has begun. The first ship is already a



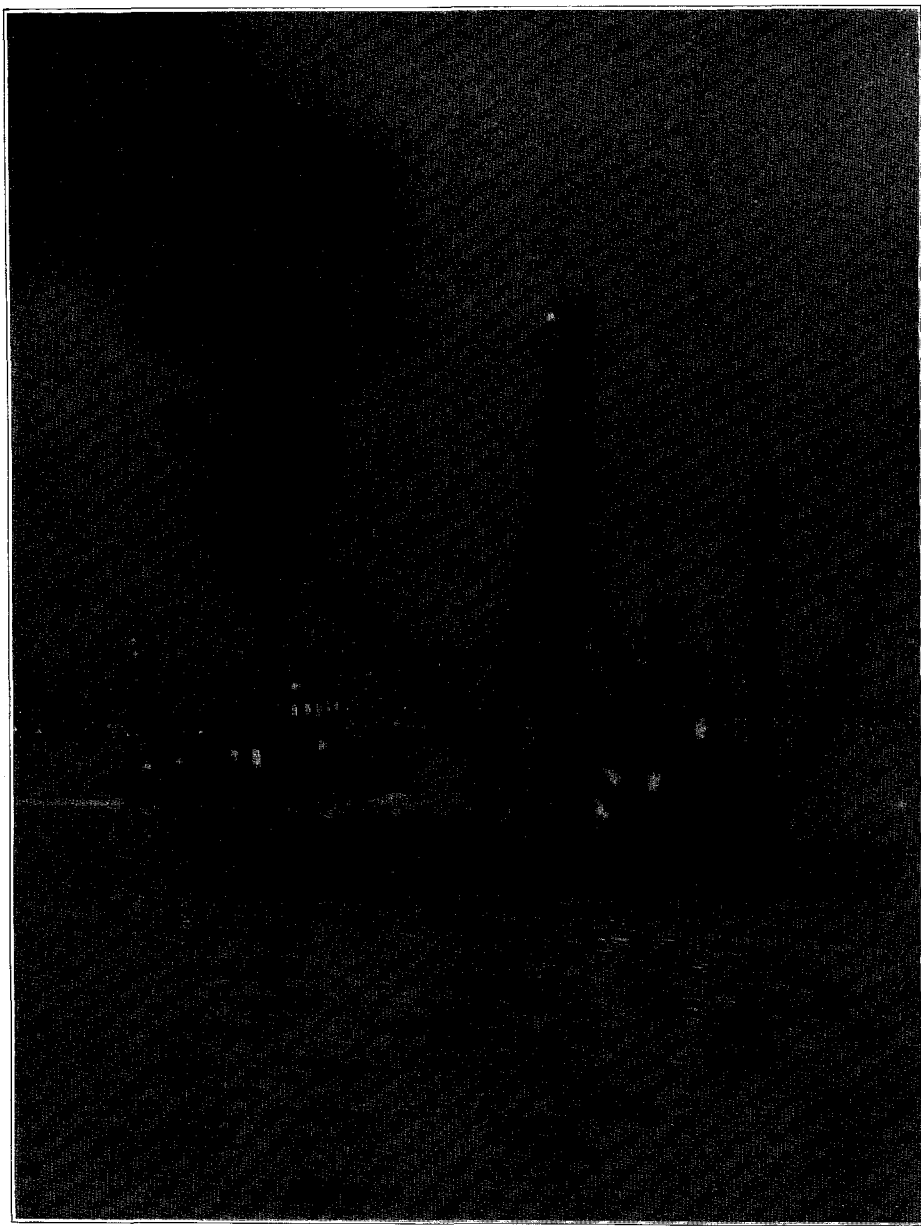
You go past a derrick lighter, too, like a huge inanimate

speck on the horizon. Behind her, down the Lower Bay, follows the procession. To see these great ships coming through The Narrows, one after the other, from the invisible city and standing out to all the ports of the world is to hold a vision of the commercial importance of the town and the harbor more overwhelming, perhaps, than any which a nearer view affords or

which any statistics can supply. And you, it may be, are sitting the while in a bathing-suit on the warm sand, basking like a savage in the sun and the clean salt air!

There are certain pleasures permitted to those we pharisaically call "the lower classes" which atone in no small measure for the lack of wealth or a place in the social register. One of these is the pleas-





spider on its back towed by a water-bug.—Page 140.

ure of eating fruit or cookies or buns in public places, if you chance to be hungry. Another is the pleasure of going down the harbor by boat to Coney Island on a hot summer night. The boat, an old-fashioned side-wheeler, drops down the Hudson from Harlem, making her last stop at Pier One, at the Battery, where a sweltering mob waits to crowd upon her already crowded

decks. You must push and scramble in the approved New York fashion if you would secure a place near the rail, and your nose will be assaulted by the smell of stale "refreshments" and your ears by the inharmonious strains of a band of musicians, sawing out a popular tune. But after the walking-beam is once more in motion and the evening breeze over the

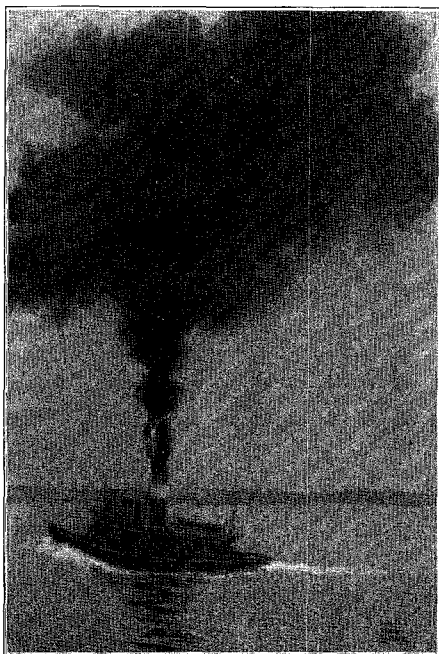
water carries the sound and odor astern, the harbor is spread for your delight.

Perhaps a last hot orange flare of sunset remains in the sky over the low Jersey shore, but night has dusked the Brooklyn bank. Behind you the Singer Tower raises its shaft of pale light, and the trains crawl like glow-worms over the high-flung web of Brooklyn Bridge. As the boat passes down well to the east of the channel, the fiery flare from a blast-furnace reddens the horizon, and against it two stand-pipes on iron stilts are suddenly thrown into silhouette out of the night, like huge daddy-long-legs striding along the top of the docks. You go past a der-rick lighter, too, like a huge inanimate spider on its back towed by a water-bug, and slip almost in among the fleet of sailing-ships anchored off Gowanus Bay. How silently, mysteriously, they ride at anchor in the night, their bare spars and faint web of rigging black against the sky, their red and green lights alone giving sign of life! Perhaps another comes to join them even as you pass, her ghostly sails booming suddenly at you out of the dark, or sliding down with a rattle of tackle and the hoarse shouts of the crew.

Through The Narrows the lines of twinkling lamps on either shore run on as far as the dark, ominous battlements of the forts, and then the Lower Bay widens ahead, the great beacon of Sandy Hook Light flashes at regular intervals seemingly out of the limitless water, and the wind freshens, grows more salt, brings to stifled nostrils a breath of brine. A short while, and the excursion boat rounds the end of Sea Gate and rolls on the dying ground swell from the open Atlantic.

And there, directly before you, though for some time you have detected its highest tower over the land, Coney Island pricks its incandescent battlements upon the night and turns to troubled gold the moving waters at its feet. A tinsel, tawdry thing by day, a delirium of shabby make-believe, by night it is a dream mirage rising out of the ocean, a towered city builded all of golden lamps, with splashes here and there of red or green; and the sound of it, coming over the surf as the steamer moves in to the pier, is the vast, happy roar of a carnival.

The Coney Island boat on its return is no less heavily laden, but the crowds are sleepy now and the atrocious band is silent. In the shadows of the stacks, or unashamedly on the open



Some tug trails a gigantic feather of velvety black smoke across the picture.—Page 134.

decks, girls lay their heads upon their lovers' shoulders. The children sprawl in slumber, their grimy hands clutching a wooden spade or a half-eaten pop-corn ball. A last look eastward before the boat enters The Narrows shows the Dreamland tower at Coney still illuminated, but the window squares on the Brooklyn bank and the hills of Staten Island are dark now. The shore is sleeping, too. Entering the Upper Bay, you know how late the hour is, because the Singer Tower is invisible. The searchlights which play upon it have been extinguished. Only a faint rosy haze of light, reflected up on the sky from the street-lamps, proclaims the city. Midnight has struck. The boat churns on past the sleeping fleet of sailing-vessels to the right, the long line of deep-sea tramps anchored under the torch of Liberty to the left. There is no sign of life on any of them. A ferry-boat goes past, her decks almost deserted. Around the nose of the



Battery a tug is creeping with a string of black barges in tow; the harbor night shift are toiling in the dark. Through the trees on Battery Park winds the glow-worm of an L-train. Above the Battery loom the monstrous, indistinct cliff walls of the sky-scrappers, and a slit of night sky between them proclaims the existence of Broadway. As the sleepy crowds on the boat clamber down the gang-plank, this dim, gargantuan pile of brick and mortar seems to swallow them up. They become dehumanized. They vanish into the dark pier-shed like black corn into a hopper. They are converted into mere atoms of the city's swarming life.

The wheels churn again, the boat moves up the river, under the stars, past the endless mountain-range of town outlined on the night sky. The smoke of day has cleared from the harbor now. The everlasting toot of whistles is almost stilled, save when a belated ferry-boat draws out of her slip or a tug labors past with a barge of freight-cars. The black water tosses cool and mysteriously deep, and when a puff of breeze comes over it from the city the sudden smell of street dust is revolting. There, where the long liners sleep beside their iron piers, nosing their prows close up to the first

lamps on the shore which twinkle away in endless perspective down the cross streets, is the end of the ocean road. Behind lies the harbor; in front lies the inland river; and between the pleasant country whence the river comes and the wind-swept waters whither the great ships go sits the city, monstrous, stifling, strong, and metallic, and asks its toll of countryside and sea. It asks its toll of us as well, on such a night as this, when we too finally leave the excursion boat and are swallowed up within its walls—its toll of sadness and unsatisfied desire. Northward, under the Palisades, the glimmering Hudson melts into the dark. Southward, washing the base of the mortared mountains, the harbor opens like a gateway of escape. A final glance from the pier before we turn into the choking streets, a final breath of its salt odor—and then the closing of the prison gates!

But, after all, the harbor has borne us for a time on its bosom into another world, and whispered, if all too briefly, of the strangeness of the sea. Even as it brings the commerce to our gates, it lifts our spirits beyond the clutch of commerce. It ministers at once to utility and to beauty. This the harbor will ever do so long as man goes down to the sea in ships.

## TRUMPET-CALLS

By C. A. Price

HARK! hark! the summons clear and far and fine!

Now on a hill in Italy I know  
The little trumpets of the springtime blow,  
Beside the twisted olive and the vine;  
Purple and red in the warm rocks they shine  
Nursed by the bending skies; and from below  
Faint overtones of bells float up that show  
Where Arno threads the plain with glancing line.

White drives the sleet and black the tree-trunks stand  
Here where I sit and forth the window stare;  
The heavens are lead, the earth an iron band  
Such as to pierce no tender flower could dare,—  
But I know how, in that enchanted land,  
The little trumpets call through the still air!