The Steerage Passenger.

BY FREDRICK M. SMITH

They were just one day out of Liverpool, and Miss Marston was sitting up in the bow of the steamer, wrapped tightly in her rug, and watching the line of the horizon rise and fall as the ship mounted and descended the waves.

Off to the right the broken line of the Irish coast showed, sometimes faintly, sometimes with such distinctness that one imagined he could see some of the life upon it. Now it was yellowish bluffs sharp out of the sea, and now a suggestion of green downs going into the distance. A steamer slipped into sight, and Miss Marston watched it closely, wondering about the people who were on it, people who were perhaps coming back to their old home, as she was going back to hers. Miss Marston had a habit of bothering herself about human beings that she found going up and down in the world. The steamer came so near that she could see the colors on the funnel, and then as she passed slowly out of her field of vision she brought her thoughts back to her own ship, and her eyes also took in the figure of a man who was leaning against the rail near her. He was a young man, and his face was clear-cut and good, but his old clothes and slouched white hat said that he was a steerage passenger.

Suddenly, as he stood there, a gust of wind captured the hat, and though he made a frantic effort, it escaped him, whirled about, came violently in contact with Miss Marston's head, and that young lady took it prisoner. The man turned, expecting to find his property blowing over the water; instead, he received it from the girl. And because of the absurdity of the situation—for a blowing hat makes everybody more lively—Miss Marston laughed.

"I thank you," said the man, formally, as he adjusted the headpiece.

Miss Marston thought there was a trace of accent in his voice. "It was lucky I was here," she vouchsafed.

"Since it was my only hat, yes."

Miss Marston was interested—a man with but one hat was a curiosity.

"You are going to make your home in America?" she questioned.

"Oh, no! My home is already there. I live in Chicago."

"Do you? So do I. What do you do?" She considered that there was condescension in her tone, but in reality it was not far from friendly.

"The trade I work at most is shoemaking," was the man's answer.

"I suppose you have been home to see your people?"

"No; I have been on a pleasure trip."

"Pleasure!" said Miss Marston, and the tone implied that his idea of pleasure was queer. She had walked through the steerage, and it did not appeal to her as a holiday-place.

"I suppose it never occurred to you that a workingman might travel for pleasure," said he.

"At least not go abroad," said Miss Marston

"We like travel, too—we of the people," he said. "We like to see the fine cities and beautiful mountains and old castles; but if we see them we are compelled to give up other things—first cabins, for instance, and fashionable clothes."

His wide, innocent blue eyes looked into hers as he spoke, and she was suddenly conscious of a feeling of inferiority, as though a man who could give up things to travel had more of a hold on life than had she.

"But you are right to do it," she said. "I'm glad you did. The men I know wouldn't," she added, half to herself.

The man turned, and looked out over the water.

The next day all Miss Marston's party were in their cabins; but she was a good sailor, and she kept the deck. Since there was nobody else to talk to, she talked to the steerage passenger, and when it came time for luncheon she decided that she could call him interesting. His views of life were so different from hers; he had got closer to things, and he had thought of them. Miss Marston wondered if all the men who tapped shoes or made coats were as well worth knowing as this one.

She placed him as a type of which she had read, but which she had never seen—a man with an education that verged on culture; a frequenter of social settlements, probably a socialist; a workman with ambition, and by nature refined, but whom chance and heredity had condemned to the life of a laborer. She was a young woman who liked new experiences; she also liked to think that she appreciated the true and the good, no matter where she found it, and that she was above bowing to the conventional.

The third day out, when Miss Marston's aunt tottered on deck, she found that young lady taking her constitutional forward in company with what she (the aunt) termed a "disreputable person."

"It's only my steerage man," said the niece.

The lady protested, but Miss Marston laughed. She was a young woman who usually had her own way, and she very frankly announced that she liked Mr. Rein, even if he was a shoemaker.

Then there were the evenings. Miss Marston's chair was usually placed just forward of the cabin on the upper deck. She liked to feel the wind—it seemed more like sailing. It was three steps to the ladder which led up from the main deck and the steerage. After the deck-lamps were lit the steerage passengers usually appeared. Miss Marston grew to expect him. The first time she had been a little startled.

"Perhaps," she hesitated, "we'd better walk forward."

"Why not sit here?"

"The stewart," said Miss Marston. She only wanted to prevent a possibility of unpleasantness.

"We're friends," said the steerage passenger. "Half crowns, you know."

"That," said Miss Marston, "seems to me extravagance."

"If you value a thing very much, you can afford to go without other things in order to get it," said the steerage passenger, slowly. "Isn't it a rare night?"

On shipboard, one day is as a thousand, and the friends of a week seem the friends of a lifetime. One day you are strangers; the next, acquaintances; the next, friends; the fifth day, lovers; the seventh—the boat gets in, and you forget each other.

On the evening of the fifth day, when Miss Marston went to her state-room she was in doubt. She had been on deck with Rein, watching the moonlight trailing on the water. They had sat in the bow, just behind the lookout, who paced steadily back and forth, quite oblivious to his companions. A lookout is a piece of the ship's machinery, and no one minds him. They were somewhat on the edge of the Gulf Stream, and the night was as balmy as a night in middle spring. A breeze moved softly on the face of the water; perhaps it was that that had brought a certain freedom and a nearer friendliness. Rein had apparently forgotten himself. He had told her much about his adventures, he had confided to her in a way his little longings. He told her what her little friendship had meant to him.

The magic of the moonlight got into their veins. They were no longer a cabin and a steerage passenger, they were a man and a woman face to face.

"To find a woman of your class who feels as you do," he said, "who understands that the poorer people may have hearts and longings and ambitions, has helped me. You have helped me. I—I—had hoped—"

Miss Marston moved.

"I beg your pardon," he ended, abruptly. "I had almost forgotten myself. Shall I take you to the companionway?"

In her state-room Miss Marston realized that it had gone a little further than she intended. She felt that perhaps he cared. The thing had the elements of tragedy, and Miss Marston did not sleep well. The next day she kept to herself and yet she was conscious that in doing so she was making something of a confession, and altogether she was very doubtful of her position.

The steamer was plowing up the waters of the lower bay. Everywhere was sunshine and beauty. All the women were on deck in their best frocks, the men in summer garments. Far forward the steerage people were huddled together.

Miss Marston stood in the bow alone. She was thinking. The voyage was over, and with it a part of its glamour. And yet she wondered whether she wished to have it over. In another day she would be at home—and the steerage passenger would be one of a million workers whom she passed without a thought. She would forget him. But somehow, down in her heart there was a little voice which said that she could not. She wondered why she couldn't be a little nice to him—help him a little—if only he would understand. Was it quite right to say "good-by" now, and to "cut him" afterward?

"I want to say good-by, Miss Marston," said his voice, at her side. "You have been good to me. I wish to thank you."

Miss Marsten gulped; then she plunged. "Come and see me some time," she said.

"You forget that I am a workingman, and you are a lady."

"Come anyway," she said, as she put out her hand.

It was the noon of three days later. Miss Marston had been shopping, and she was lunching with a girl she knew. She was dabbling over her salad, when a well-known voice caught her ear. She looked up quickly to see, going to a near table, the steerage passenger. He wore flannels, and carried a straw hat with a blue band. Miss Marston gasped a little.

"Josephine," she said, clutching her friend's arm and motioning with her head to the men at the table, "do you—do you know that man?"

Josephine turned. "Why!" she exclaimed, "that's Knowlton, the economics man at the university! You've heard of his book, 'Among the Workers.' He's spent the last five years living as a workingman all over the world. He's all the talk now, and his pictures are in all the papers. I hear he's just home from Europe."

"Yes," said Miss Marston, faintly. She put her hand on a little note that she had received that morning. It was signed "The Man in the Steerage," and it said that he would call on her that evening.

Perhaps the glance that she could not keep to herself warned him of her presence, for he looked up as she was leaving the table, and seeing her, got up to speak to her.

"I know," she said, flushing, as she gave him her hand.

"I was coming to tell you tonight—and to ask you to forgive me, and also to ask the question which I have found it hard to keep back. Though I'm afraid I wanted to test you a little—to know whether you would let me come in my part as a working man. It wouldn't have been fair to have put you to the greater test of answering my question."

"I'm glad you didn't ask it before I knew. I don't know what I'd have answered. It would have been hard, wouldn't it?"

"Is it hard now?" he asked.

She laughed. "I shall expect you at eight," she said.

The April Lippincott's Magazine.

Lippincott's Magazine has won a reputation for its monthly novels. That in the April number, a stunning good one called "The Trifler," is written by Archibald Eyre, an English author of rising fame. "The Trifler," a member of London's smartest society, has a kind heart and an almost too keen sense of humor. He is appealed to by his new sister-in-law to extricate her from an appalling situation. A man to whom she had once been engaged and had jilted for Sir Gerald Trewint has had her love-letters printed "for private circulation only." "The Trifler" having himself felt the burnt of his brother's anger, shows quick sympathy for the bride and rashly promises assistence. In executing a plan to effectually stop the whole thing he is taken for a thief. This leads to some delicate predicaments and amusing escapades. "The Trifler" shows he can be earnest enough in winning the girl he ardently loves.

The tale bearing on the great Coal Strike by Edith Robinson called "An Involuntary Benefactor" is a clever instance of contrary fate versus millions. A terrapin dinner, intended to oil the wheels and turn them towards a capitalist's designs, goes astray and fulfils a far different purpose. The strike is won by his sympathy.

A lovely nature story by Dr. Charles C. Abbott is called "A Fresh' on the Ma'sh;" and Florence Kingston Hoffman's amusing tale of "A Lucky Stratagem" will be enjoyed by everybody, especially those in "the profession."

"If I had money," she said, languidly, "I'd be the most indolent person in the world. I'd have some one to do everything for me. I'd even have some one to wish for me." "Wish for you?" he replied. "Yes, if you had money, I'd wish for you myself."

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NOTICE.

The ninth annual meeting of The Tobique River Log Driving Company will be held at the Village of Andover, in the County of Victoria, at Beveridge's Hall, in said village, on TUESDAY, the 14th day of April next, at two of the clock in the afternoon, for the purpose of electing a Board of Directors, and for the transaction of such business as may legally come before the meeting.

Dated the 7th day of March, A. D., 1903.

HENRY HILYARD, President,
J. C. HARTLEY, Sec'y for the Company.

N. B.—Every owner of logs and other lumber or timber intended to be driven by the said company during the coming season, must file with the secretary a statement of the same on or before the day of the annual meeting, and no lumberman can become a member of the said Company, nor be entitled to vote at its meeting until said statement has been filed.

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Intercolonial Railway.

Tender for Freight Shed at Sydney.

Sealed Tenders, addressed to the undersigned, and marked on the outside "Tender Sydney Freight Shed," will be received until

TUESDAY, THE 7TH DAY OF APRIL, 1903,

for the above work

Plans and specification may be seen at the Office of the Station Master at Sydney and at the Chief Engineer's Office, Moncton, N. B., where forms of tender may be obtained.

All the conditions of the Specification must be complied with.

D. POTTINGER,
General Manager.

Railway Office,
Moncton, N. B.,
March 20th, 1903.

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NOTICE OF LEGISLATION

Application will be made to the Local Legislature at its next session for the passage of an Act to authorize the Municipality of Carleton to make a grant to the Public Hospital in the Town of Woodstock not exceeding five hundred dollars per annum.

By order of County Council,
J. C. HARTLEY,
Secretary-Treasurer of the
Municipality of Carleton.

Woodstock, N. B., March 2nd, 1903.

NOTICE OF LEGISLATION

Application will be made to the Local Legislature at its next sssion for the passage of an Act to authorize the Municipality of Carleton to accept from the Town of Woodstock a certain fixed proportion of the amounts ordered assessed by the said Municipality for County and School Purposes, and also to provide for the payment by the Town of Woodstock to the Municipality of Carleton of the indebtedness of said town in nine equal annual instalments.

By order of County Council,
J. C. HARTLEY,
Secretary-Treasurer of the
Municipality of Carleton.

Woodstock, N. B., March 2nd, 1903.

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In no department of the home, we feel safe in saying, has there been a greater transformation brough about in recent years by the introduction of up to date appliances than in the case with respect to the day generally termed WASH DAY.

This day of all days in the week is the one hitherto mostly dreaded; but in the home where proper appliances are used it is not less bright and free from onerous rountine than any other of the working days.

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