

without being known. The temperature of the coal-bunkers has to be reported to the captain three times daily, so that hidden fire there would reveal itself in time to be controlled. Moreover, the water in the hold is measured three times every day and reported. Besides watchmen on duty day and night, patrolling the decks, it is the duty of the captain, doctor, and steward to daily inspect every part of the ship. We were invited to accompany them on one of those tours of inspection, embracing each of the state-rooms, to see that they were properly cleaned and ventilated; the kitchens and pantry, with their shining sets of tin and silver-plate; the butcher shop and the bakery; the steerage, freshly fumigated by burnt spices, with hundreds of bunks stretching in long rows far as the eye could see—the steerage passengers in line, so that if any were sick of contagious disease he might be quarantined before it should spread; and, last of all, the engine-room, with its ponderous machinery, constructed as if to defy not simply the severest storms, but time itself. Moreover, each officer serves as a sort of check on any other officer's neglect. Thrice a day the officer of the deck sends a messenger to Captain —, announcing "Eight bells, sir." This means either 8 A.M., 12 P.M., or 8 P.M.—hours at which the commander must wind the ship's chronometers, determine her latitude and longitude, and receive reports from subordinates.

Another letter must give incidents of the voyage On the "Alaska," Nov. 11, 1876.

LETTER VI.

INCIDENTS OF THE PACIFIC VOYAGE.

LIFE on board ship is necessarily somewhat monotonous, and any incidents of the voyage are always hailed with joy by the passengers. For the most part, the daily programme is, read, write, eat, sleep, and, if the weather permits, walk on the hurricane deck. At twelve o'clock each day the captain takes his bearings and announces by bulletin the distance made during the last twenty-four hours, our latitude and longitude, and the course of the ship. Three of these bulletins are made out; one is given to the chief engineer, another is posted for the information of the cabin passengers, and another for the steerage. These are eagerly consulted, and calculations are made as to how long at present rate we shall be on the voyage. Then we watch the Chinese sailors at their work, scrubbing or painting the ship and handling the sails; or notice the officer of the deck on watch, walking his beat across the bow of the vessel or consulting the compass and writing up the "log" of the ship; and the quartermaster turning the wheel and sounding the "bells." Occasionally a jelly-fish or a porpoise, or, more rarely, even a whale, permits itself to be seen. The skies and the water are the great objects of study, and seem to be in close sympathy with each other. The ocean serves as a vast mirror, in which we can see all the varied tints and shades of

the clouds. One has never seen a sunrise or a sunset in all its glory who has not seen the sun come up from or sink down into the ocean, attended with a right royal train of gold covering all the face of the sea. We know best when it is raining by looking not at the skies, but at the ocean. If angry masses of clouds appear in the heavens, we know that the sea will be the first to express their rage in rising billows.

Tuesday, November 7th, being the day for the election of President of the United States, the purser of the ship arranged for the passengers to cast their ballots. Formal notice was duly posted on the bulletin-board, and the ballot-box was prepared. All were permitted to cast one vote, and were required to enter their name on the margin of their ballot, so that there might be no repeating. The scenes were strikingly like those of election days at home. Some were very eager, and even electioneering; others were indifferent, not voting; while the interest of some led to stuffing the ballot-box. As the time drew near for the polls to close, you would have thought from the nervous condition of one or two that they really supposed the fate of the nation to depend on the result of our ballots. The events of the day served to remind us forcibly of our native land, from which we were so rapidly receding. The wires at Yokohama will have the news of the result in the United States awaiting us nearly three weeks before we reach there.

On the evening of November 12th there was quite a heavy sea and considerable wind. The apparatus for holding the plates on the dinner-table, named "plate-racks," was called into requisition. It is very much like a ladder, only the rounds are not so near together. One is placed at each side of the table and joined to the other by leather straps, and is a necessity in very rough weather. The

quartermaster at the wheel needs an assistant at such a time, and, notwithstanding such help, the sudden motion of the ship caused him a broken arm. The heavy sea beat in on the coffin of the dead Chinese steerage passenger, and the mate deemed it best to move the coffin, lest the cement should begin to crumble. Calling on the Chinese sailors to bear it to a different part of the ship, they refused, saying, "No belong China custom." They are very superstitious about handling the dead outside of their own families, under the belief that the spirit of the dead man will punish them.

One of the Chinese in the engineer's department had died during the night, and this fact, with the insubordination of the sailors, was at once reported to the captain. He immediately ordered the crew—twenty-five in number—to be placed in irons unless they obeyed the mate's order, threatening them with loss of wages and imprisonment on reaching Hong Kong. The following is the conversation in "pigeon English:" *Crew*—"You then no have go topside." *Captain*—"No matter, I'll put you in irons." *Crew*—"No belong China custom." *Captain*—"No belong my custom. This is your pigeon. Melican dead my pigeon. You no move that coffin in three hours more, that dead Chinaman by engine he go downside." The crew were put in irons for a couple of hours, and finally they all agreed to obey orders, and moved the coffin as required. "Pidgen," or "pigeon," is the Chinaman's nearest approach to the word "business." All conversation has to be carried on with them in "pigeon English." The above conversation is simply this: The crew said, "You will have no one to go aloft if you iron us, and it is not our custom to handle the dead." The captain replied, "It is your business to care for the Chinese dead, and mine to look after the Americans who die. If you don't

move that coffin in three hours, I will throw overboard the dead Chinaman in the engineer's department." This last threat was enough, for they knew that the captain would do as he said, and that if any of them should die they would go "downside" also. As many as one hundred and eighty-five embalmed bodies have been taken over in one ship by the Pacific Mail-line. Sailing vessels are more used for that purpose now, and a few days ago one left San Francisco whose entire cargo was dead Chinamen. The doctor of the "Alaska" is called in to embalm the body immediately after death on board ship. Usually there are several deaths on the way to China, but rarely any on the way from there, as those who come over are mostly young and vigorous.

A visit to the steerage, to see the Chinese eat or play at their peculiar games, is full of interest. Nearly all of them are constantly playing from the time they are up in the morning. They are seated in groups on mats spread on the deck. One in each group is a sort of banker, with whom is deposited the "cash" or other coin. He promptly pays the amount won during the games. The most exciting game consists in casting three dice into a small china bowl. Whoever succeeds in so casting them that the three sides which appear are all alike wins the game. They become very excited in playing. If they are not successful they often attribute it to the presence of the lookers-on, or to the position of the bowl, which they change at once. Many play at these games who do not smoke opium, because of the expensiveness of the habit. An opium "tooper" often has to pay a dollar a day for the amount he smokes.

A more pleasant sight is to see the Chinamen eat. The purser one afternoon invited us down to the steerage for that purpose. We stopped first at the

steerage kitchen, to see a Chinaman with a long-handled iron spade shoveling out the steaming rice, from the huge vats in which it had just been cooked, into bushel-baskets, while another stood by with a kind of pitchfork stirring and cooling it. Forty-four large tin pans were then filled with it, and as many more filled with meat and cabbage, and borne to the different messes in the steerage. These messes consist of thirteen persons each, who are soon squatted around their dinner and eating it with great relish. Each of the thirteen has a bowl and a pair of chopsticks. By means of a wooden spoon he fills his bowl with the rice, and placing the meat and cabbage on top of it as he needs them, he is soon at work. The chopsticks are held between the thumb and the first and third fingers, and are handled with great ease in picking up bits of meat and cabbage; but when it comes to eating the rice, the bowl is held to the mouth and its contents simply shoveled in. In addition to these articles of their bill-of-fare, each mess has the privilege of having cooked any extras or delicacies which they themselves furnish. Accordingly they all have dishes of sausage, concerning the nature of which we wisely decline making any inquiry. The bushel-baskets filled with the cooked rice are placed at convenient points, and the large mess-pans are often replenished during the meal. It takes a pound and a third of rice a day for each Chinaman on the return voyage, but coming over to America they usually require two pounds each. The estimated cost of feeding them is about ten cents a day each. The hours of their meals are 6:30 A.M., 11 A.M., and 3:30 P.M. Immediately after the third meal they all go to bed, and sleep until six o'clock the next morning.

When we had been out some fifteen days the doctor was fearful that one of the steerage passen-

gers had the small-pox. He was accordingly put in the hospital near the stern of the ship, and a strict quarantine kept until the disease should develop itself. His fears were realized, and, aside from a plentiful use of carbolic acid and other disinfectants, every one on board was immediately vaccinated. As there were more than seven hundred of us, it was no small job, but the doctor was assisted by a couple of other physicians on board, and it was all attended to in a few hours. The Chinese yielded with but few objections. When this unfortunate Chinaman died of this disease he was buried in the sea. He had a brother with him in the hospital to attend on him constantly. Many on board are returning home to die of pulmonary disease, contracted in the too severe climate of California. There is a supply of coffins on board for such as may fall on the way. Should there be any other cases of small-pox, our ship will probably be quarantined for ten or fourteen days at Hong Kong. The Japanese are less strict at Yokohama, and we have little fear of detention there.

On Friday, November 17, at noon, the bulletin announced our longitude as one hundred and seventy-seven degrees twenty-nine minutes *west*. In the afternoon one could see, by the frequent visits to the barber shop, that something unusual was about to happen. The next day was Sunday, the 19th, and Saturday, the 18th, was dropped, or set down as a *dies non*. We had in the meantime crossed the meridian, or one hundred and eightieth degree, and the next announcement on the bulletin was longitude one hundred and seventy-nine degrees nineteen minutes *east*. The gong sounded at half-past ten o'clock for Sunday service, and we assembled in the social hall to listen to an instructive sermon by Bishop Marvin, on "The corn of wheat." Thus was the Jewish Sabbath once more superseded

by the first day of the week. With all on board it was a profitable day. It was still Saturday with our friends in America, but we were now on the other side of the world, and hence we conformed to the Sabbath being observed by the followers of Jesus in Japan, China, India, and the East generally. Of what minor consequence is the mere day of the week observed, so that we consecrate one day to be a Sabbath unto the Lord! Had we gone on observing the same day without dropping one, we should find on getting back to America that we were keeping Monday in place of Sunday.

Perhaps the necessity for "dropping a day" will be made more clear to some minds by a simple illustration. Mrs. —, of Hong Kong, one of our lady passengers, concluded on leaving New York not to change her watch during the voyage. On reaching San Francisco her watch was three hours and ten minutes fast; on reaching the one hundred and eightieth degree it was seven hours fast—that is, while the ship's clock said 9 A.M. her watch said 4 P.M. Had she started from Greenwich, England, in place of New York, it would be twelve hours fast in place of seven; so that while it would be 9 P.M. by the ship's time, it would be 9 A.M. the following day by hers. By the time she reached Hong Kong her watch would be over sixteen hours faster than local time there, and on getting back to Greenwich it would have gained twenty-four hours, or a whole day. To avoid confusion, this extra day is by common consent dropped on crossing the meridian going west. The ship's time is altered every day to correspond with the true time ascertained at eight o'clock every morning. We thus put the clock back about fifteen minutes daily, and finally make the calendar correspond. Coming east, on the other hand, the clock has to be put forward every day and the calendar is made to correspond by adding a day.

Thus if the ship crosses the meridian on Sunday, the next day is Sunday also. It is 11 A.M. Monday, November 20, as we write these lines, while with our friends in Missouri it is 5 P.M. Sunday, November 19. We hope that they have spent a delightful Sabbath thus far, and that they will be profited by the evening services in their sanctuaries.

We cannot refrain from saying that some of our most pleasant religious experiences are connected with this voyage. Bishop Marvin and we are reading the Bible in course during this trip, having as a daily lesson two chapters each in the Old and New Testaments. Reading alternate verses, and pausing for comments or for consulting references by means of our excellent Bagster Bibles, the living word is proving very nourishing to our souls. Some one has said that the Bible was written to be read in the open air. Certainly much of it is best understood by being read at sea. "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters." "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." As we read his word to-day over the deepest water in the world (more than five miles deep), lashed all yesterday by the furious storm, we rejoice to sing,

This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our love.

The Sabbath services, too, conducted in turn by Bishop Marvin, the Rev. Dr. Dean, and ourself, have not been without profit, even though the congregations never numbered over a score and a half. In the number were found a converted Chinaman and one Christian Japanese, most devout worshipers. Then the singing on Sabbath evening! Gathered around the piano, many earnest souls sung, as at home, "Sweet hour of prayer," "Star of Bethlehem,"

"Rock of Ages," and many other hymns, the full meaning of which we had not known till now.

On yesterday a sudden squall beat down upon the ship with terrific fury. The sailors had not time to reef the sails before they were hid from our sight by the blinding rain. Drenched to the skin, the poor fellows up in the rigging could hardly see each other. The rain, as it dashed upon the sea, raised such a mist that the ocean itself was hid. The ship turned almost on one side, plunged on, one of the paddle-wheels half of the time out of the water. The waves dashed higher than the vessel, covering her with spray. The plate-racks at the table were of little service, for as the vessel madly plunged, the soup was scattered over the passengers. One lady, drenched with soup, started to her state-room and was thrown violently on the floor. The wind whistled in the rigging, mingling with the hoarse voices of command on deck, and the creaking of the ship's timbers, and the crash of crockery. Our overcoats, not needed since the fourth day out, were donned again. The captain, unable to make observations of the sun, made up his reckoning by the stars at midnight, as the storm cleared away, and reports that at noon to-day we are within two hundred and four miles of Yokohama, where we drop anchor at ten o'clock to-morrow morning, November 30, after a run of twenty-eight days, without the sight of a single sail since the first afternoon out from San Francisco.

The voyage on the whole has been quite a pleasant one. We ran most of the time between the thirty-first and thirtieth degrees north latitude, or about as far south as Savannah, Georgia. The air was as mild as in May. The ship's library afforded ample food, both light and solid, for the intellect, while the steward's daily bill-of-fare continued to the last day amply to satisfy the most diverse tastes.

To say that we had fresh peas and celery daily, and ice-cream twice a week throughout the voyage, may convey some idea of the ship's capacity to carry fresh supplies of all kinds. We had some quite rough weather, but less than was to be expected at this time of the year. We doubtless avoided much rough sailing by going so far south, although it made our voyage much longer. When we reach Yokohama in the morning we shall have run five thousand one hundred and twenty-one miles from San Francisco.

We were seasick once or twice—long enough to know what it is, and to be satisfied as to the cause of it. It doubtless comes from a sort of vertigo, or dizziness, produced by the rolling of the vessel. This interferes with the circulation of the blood and produces nausea. If the head can be supported and kept stationary by the back of a chair, or in a reclining posture, there is no difficulty. When one gets accustomed to the motion of the vessel there is less danger of vertigo; hence seasickness is most usual at the beginning of the voyage. We are still not so fond of the sea as to reciprocate the sentiments of the song of "A life on the ocean wave." A lady passenger says that its author must have had neither brains nor nerves, but the stomach of a shark.

With profoundest thanksgiving to our Father in heaven for his watchful care during the voyage, we close these notes to-night, expecting with the morning light to look upon Japan, "the land of the rising sun."

On the "Alaska," Nov 29, 1876.

LETTER VII.

OUR FIRST DAYS IN JAPAN.

WE did not sleep as well as usual on Wednesday night, November 29. Sleep is a principal thing in a sea voyage, and hence, because one has to sleep so much, physicians often recommend crossing the ocean for one's health. The motion of the vessel puts you to sleep, and if you waken after a good night's rest it is apt to woo you to slumber again, if not immediately, at least before more than four or five hours. But not so on the morning of November 30. We had been promised sight of land by daylight, and we were on the lookout for it. More than once during the night we tried to get a glimpse of Japan in the clear moonlight, but without success. But at length with the early dawn we were rejoiced on looking out of our window to see Breese Island faintly outlined on the horizon. Hurriedly dressing to see Cape King on the other side of the ship, we found several of our late risers already on deck drinking in the glad sight of the main-land stretching away for miles. We absolutely envied some of our Japanese passengers as they stood silently looking on their native shores once more. There were genuine thanksgivings at our worship that morning for the sight of land again after four weeks of gazing upon the wide waste of the Pacific.

We were now fifty miles from Yokohama, which