

## THE SEA.

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The ancients had a saying that those who cross the sea change their sky, but not their mind,—“*Qui trans mare current caelum non animam mutant.*” No man can escape from himself. The companionship is inseparable.

But there is something more than change of locality in the isolation of a long ocean voyage. When the last dim headland disappears, and the continent vanishes in the deep, the separation from the human race is complete. All the accustomed incidents and habits of daily life are suspended, and those who are assembled in that casual society might be the solitary survivors of mankind.

Wars and catastrophes and bereavements may shock the world, but here they are unheard and unknown. Suns rise and set and rise again, but the great ship makes no apparent progress. She remains the centre of an unchanging circumference. The vast and sombre monotony is unbroken. Above is the infinite abyss of the sky with its clouds and stars. Beneath is the infinite abyss of the sea with its winds and waves. Sometimes the faint phantom of a sail appears above the vague fluctuating horizon and silently fades away, or a stain of smoke against the distant mist discloses the pathway of some remote and unknown tenant of the solitude.

The moods of the sea are endless, but it has no compassion. It glitters in the sun, but its smile is cruel and relentless. It is

eager to devour. Its forces are destructive. Each instant is fraught with peril. Its agitation is incessant, and it lies in wait to engulf and destroy. Resisting every effort to subdue its obstacles, when its baffled billows are cleft, they gather in the ghastly wake, and rage at their discomfiture.

In the presence of this implacable enemy, whose smiles betray, whose voice is an imprecation, whose embrace is death, meditation becomes habitual and the mind changes like the sky.