

## CHAPTER III.

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### NEW YORK.

Quarantine.—The custom house officer.—Irish carmen and porters.—Our children on board.—Broadway.—American omnibuses.—The post office.—The money changer.—Speculation.—The cobbler.—Hotels.—Gentle and simple.—A chambermaid.—Private rooms.

I HAD often heard the harbour of New York compared to the Bay of Naples ; and I can now testify that both are formed of land and water. Other resemblance, I saw not : nothing whatever on which to found any degree of comparison. The grand distinguishing feature of New York harbour is the variety and freshness of its waters ; uncrowded, unencumbered by a mass of various shipping, such as would block up any other port in the world. But where does New York harbour begin ?—where end ? Is it the mouth of a river, or is it an inlet of the sea amongst headlands, adown which a navigable river flows, and the tide rises some forty miles ? an inlet confined be-

tween banks from one to five miles apart! To compare this with any mere haven or basin for shipping, were an absurdity.

I did not note that peculiar clearness in the atmosphere of which many English travellers write,—probably because I had been accustomed to the brighter skies of Provence and the South of Europe; but I could not but relish the extraordinary freshness of the scenery around. Woods, hills, houses and churches that dotted them,—all seemed delightfully clean and fresh,—new and not yet worn and soiled by time; and the slim pinnacles and steamers that cut across, rather than through, the waters in every direction, with a speed unknown in the old world, gave to the whole an animation and life such as I had noted in no other scenery.

We were anchored opposite “Quarantine Ground”,—which, I was told, was the name of a large building on the shore a quarter of a mile on our left: and the mate had told our boys how, in the early settlement of the country, the beautiful island on which it stands had been purchased from the Indians