

## CHAPTER VI.

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### LAKE ERIE.

The Mayor of Buffalo and the porters.—The night of a nurse.—Lake Erie.—Cross questions and crooked answers.—Emigration.—Sandusky City.—Labels for railway luggage.—Through the forest.—Log houses and frame houses.—A worm fence.—Clearings.—Agriculture of Ohio.—Arrival at Cincinnati.

RETURNING from Niagara Falls, we had tea with our five youngest children, whom we had left at the hotel at Buffalo, and then drove to the quay and embarked on the *Empire* steamer on Lake Erie. The porter brought our baggage on board; I gave it in charge to the steward, who was to pay particular attention to it for a particular remuneration. The hotel porter then made some extraordinary charge for himself, the nature of which I now forget; but which I positively refused to pay. Hereupon occurred a scene such as we read of in old novels. The porter threatened to take back my luggage in lieu of payment; and I

warned the steward that, the luggage being committed to his charge, I should hold the steamer responsible if any of it was touched. The porter would call a sheriff's officer. I told him to do so. I watched him go across the quay, and presently return with a companion.

"I am an officer," said he, "sent to enforce payment of this gentleman's charge (N.B. the "gentleman" was the porter.)

"What is his charge?" I asked.

This was a puzzler; and the confederate appealed to his principal; being informed thereon, he returned to me.

"What is your own name?" I asked.

His name, he said, mattered not. He came from the mayor of Buffalo.

"And the mayor of Buffalo has given judgment on the statement of your friend only! Show me the judgment, and your authority."

The confederate was staggered, and both began to bully.

"Hark ye, gentlemen," said I; "the mayor of Buffalo has just gone on board the steamer. Look! there he is on deck—that tall gentleman

with his lady and child. Let us go and appeal to him."

The two confederates looked in the direction in which I pointed; then looked at one another; and then, turning on their heels, quickly disappeared.

I went up to the mayor of Buffalo and told him what had just occurred. He was much amused; and expressed regret that he had not become acquainted with his self-constituted officer. He was a pleasant, well-informed man, and was going on a little trip westward with his family.

As our voyage was to last through the night, it was necessary to select cabins. I found on board the steamer, two or three separate rooms on deck with full sized beds in them; and for a small additional charge, I secured one of these for myself and my wife. They called them Bride's rooms. The eleven children of the "bride" were not so comfortably bestowed. In order to show the uninitiated how nurses often spend the night, I copy an extract from the journal of Lucy, my late invalid of Talence, but whom the sea voyage had completely

restored to health: "The steamer", she writes, "was built on much the same plan as the *New World*; but, instead of the separate inner nursery, there was one public ladies' saloon, with berths round it, in which all we girls had the pleasure of sleeping. No strangers were there, except a neat little Irishwoman and her baby; another very quiet respectable-looking old lady; and an old woman who had never been on the water before, and had expressed her fears to me throughout the evening, exclaiming, 'Now I hope there won't be a storm!' 'Ain't you afeard the biler'l bust, and that if it did, we should all be lost.' The novelty of my situation, in the upper berth over my sister, and the light in the cabin kept me awake: but I was just beginning to doze at about one o'clock, when the door of the ladies' washing-room opened and my friend, the timid old woman, came in and began to undress. She had betaken herself to that room about nine o'clock and had wished to take a candle with her; but the stewardess had not allowed it, so she had lit her cigar by the lamp of the stewardess and, as the latter told us, had been

smoking and drinking brandy and water there in the dark. However, about one o'clock, when my eyes were half shut, I saw her return into the cabin and begin to undress ; but having fumbled about for some time unsuccessfully endeavouring to do so, she scrambled into her berth, as she was, with her clothes on, and I went to sleep. I had not long enjoyed a refreshing rest, when I was waked by the noise of my little brother coughing and choking ; I listened for some time, and then got down from my berth and took him out of his bed. He coughed and seemed to be choking as if he had the croup ; but, at last, he fell asleep, and I laid him in his bed again : but he had not been there one minute before his coughing returned ; and he continued coughing and choking for two hours, but waked up whenever I attempted to put him in his bed. So I wrapped myself and him in shawls, and we slept together in the rocking chair till morning. Two of my sisters woke and asked what was the matter, and then went to sleep again. The little Irish baby woke up and began to cry, but soon was quieted : his mother