

Disaster to the Great Eastern—A Time of Deep Trial.

STEAMSHIP NIAGARA, Bound for Boston—of Cape Race, October 2, 1861.

Before this reaches you, some tidings of the late terrible disaster to the Great Eastern, which ought now to be called, "the great misfortune," will, no doubt, have appeared in your paper.

As it was an event of the deepest and most overwhelming importance to all on board—a large portion of whom were Americans—and one in which the public will feel the liveliest interest, I have seen myself one of the passengers and an eye witness of the whole, and having taken full notes from day to day, I venture to describe it as fully and clearly as I can on board this ship in a rough sketch.

The monster ship having made three successful trips across the Atlantic, and having been hailed by her extraordinary speed, exemption from the tossing and rolling to which other ships are subjected, we were ten days in order to take passage by her from Liverpool to New-York.

The number of passengers on board was one hundred and ninety-three, and the whole crew three hundred and eighty-two, making in all, seven hundred and seventy-two souls on board.

The vessel was covered with little stoves, crowded with passengers, banners flying, and the music of the band sailing round and round the great vessel, the dense crowd on board of them cheering and waving their handkerchiefs.

A large number of persons, some of them, interested in the ship—directors, shareholders, and friends of the passengers—were on board. About three o'clock, the vessel began to move, and the huge monster began to move slowly down the Mersey—amid the booming of cannon and the cheers of the tens of thousands of spectators, covering the wharfs for miles.

After three o'clock we crossed the bar, and stopped to discharge the pilot and all who were not destined for New-York. We then soon steamed away at the rate of about twelve miles an hour. The afternoon and evening were calm and beautiful, and I never slept on board a ship where there was so little motion.

Early on Wednesday morning, the 11th, we passed Queenstown, at noon we had made three hundred and seven miles, from the time we left Liverpool; about two o'clock we passed Cape Clear, and soon after lost sight of land, steaming away, most majestically, toward New-York.

felt that our situation was becoming every moment in the highest degree critical. I seized an iron railing near the entrance to the saloon and opposite the smoke-pipe, and almost at the same instant a tremendous sea strikes the ship, dashing her over at an angle of at least forty-five degrees, and all the women and children in the saloon were dashed with great violence from one side to the other, and catching at the tables and lounges. These were all torn loose from their very slight fastenings, and dashed from side to side with the living mass, crashing and wrecking in pieces, more and more every time they crossed the vessel, and the scene was frightful in the extreme.

I stood appalled, really expecting that every one in the saloon would be killed, or seriously maimed. The rolling of the vessel was so rapid, that to render assistance was utterly impossible. The vessel subsided a little, and the motion ceased for a moment, but in a few minutes it was again in the extreme.

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