

**ON BOARD SHIP,
AT LAST, ON WAY
TO ELLIS ISLAND**

**Smiles and Songs from
Emigrants at Sailing.**

The following is the sixth article of a series by Miss Genevieve Forbes, a member of The Tribune staff, who has just returned to America, passing through Ellis island as an Irish immigrant girl:

BY GENEVIEVE FORBES.
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Lack of education, what excuses are made in the academic name. The rejected immigrant, loath to admit disqualification on the score of morals, cleanliness, or health, prefers to blame all his troubles on inability to read and write. As a result, when we go to the inspector's office at Queenstown, we find an inconsiderately large group of "illiterate illiterates." We all know the subterfuge, but we play the game, not so much through loyalty as through fear lest it may also be our game.
It is 3 o'clock the afternoon before sailing as we line up for medical examination in the basement of the steamship office at Queenstown. The men go to the left, to the doctor; the girls to the right, to the nurse.
As we wait our turn the fifty or more women discuss the affair. It is amazing how easily we forget our conversational formulae and speak with frankness and feeling of "bugs."
The Last Ordeal on Shore.
Every now and then the door opens and girls come out, some smiling confidently, others crying.
It is our turn. Eight of us go in.
"Take down your hair and remove your waists," comes the order from the nurse, a kindly woman who tries to reassure the line of trembling girls. Timidly we obey. One girl is examined, seven look on and listen to the verdict. And so on, until the eight has been inspected. One of the group has a "bad head"; she is ordered to have a special treatment with warm vinegar and lyeol. The rest of us are given a perfect score, with qualifications. "Buy a fine tooth comb and keep using it, in case—" advises the matron.
Tip—Still More Tips.
Our skin is carefully examined, likewise our underclothes. The vaccination coverings are torn off entirely. Just that morning a woman was discovered to have sucked the vaccine from the arms of five newly vaccinated girls. They have been revaccinated and warned.
The nurse takes us to the doctor and makes her report, which, in the majority of cases, he accepts. The girls tip her half a crown each. Out of their pathetically small resources they give the money because they have been

CZECHO-SLOVAK IMMIGRANTS STARTING FOR U. S.



[Photo by Genevieve Forbes.]

It's a long way to Ellis island, so why begin to worry? These three immigrants from Czecho-Slovakia have passed their preliminary examinations and are safe aboard the steamer that is to carry them to America. They were fellow steerage passengers of Miss Genevieve Forbes, who is describing for The Tribune the experience of immigrants in getting to and through Ellis island to the haven of America.

told tipping insures leniency. In this case the nurse is not working for money, but we are soon to learn of a highly perfected system of shake-downs whereby subordinate officials drain funds from girls already poor.

But this nurse has a grudge against Ellis island and tries to pass us, even the "foreigner" and five children with the purple hair, the result of a boot-polish shampoo, taken because, in the words of the little girl, "our hair was so fat."

"Let the Island Worry."
"I told them to wash their hair, and let them pass," says the nurse; "let the Island worry about them."
With detached frankness we journey to the barber shop, there to purchase combs and other equipment. The barber, a veritable Bluebeard, points to the four scalps hanging on his wall, saying:
"Sure, that's a fine head of hair,

belongs to Julia Casey from Galway. And then lovely curls over there. Ain't it a shame?"

Poor Julia and Nellie and the others—their secret is theirs no longer. In spite of the tightly fitting caps they wear at the dock the next morning.

Statistically speaking, from our Queenstown group of 130 three men are rejected by the authorities, two leave because they fear Sinn Fein intervention, two girls are rejected, three have their hair bobbed, two have it shaved, and twenty-eight of the forty-seven girls are warned to have a shampoo before the sailing.

A sleepless night at an inexpensive hotel, seven in a room. On the dock by 7:30. At 10 the tender is ready for us. First and second class passengers aboard first. Steerage passengers must learn not to rush in where anybody else wants to go.
By 10:30 they are ready for us. Four

officials stand at the gangway.

"Drop your luggage, show your hands," they yell. The skin of our hands is scrutinized; our hair is examined; we stumble over our cheap suit cases, are bundled over a plank and we are on the tender.

A ride of an hour, another gang-plank, another wait for third class turn, this time under the constant gaze of field glasses playing upon us from the upper decks, with the regularity of a machine gun, and we are aboard the steamer which is to take us to America.

It's a long way to Ellis Island, so we smile, sing Irish melodies and laugh at our first sight of the 300 "continentals" who are our fellow-passengers.

Adventure, we decide, is just a series of commonplace, but difficult ones. [Tomorrow—A Typical Day in the Steerage.]



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