in all the store windows in the small river towns; so when the "New Idlewild" hoisted her gangplank on the brightest work, that glistened in the sunlight. morning of last June, all things bade great event on the river.

river had ever seen. Of course, there their feet. were a few great white palaces, with patronized to a great extent by the peo- miles away. ple along the levee, for they were not accommodating enough to stop at small

day. The excursionists demanded a spots. But near the engines it was hot fast boat, and the captain always tried with fever dampness. "shove her."

landings.

big New Orleans packet.

people and cooing doves.

The invalius and old people drank in out for the next landing. and looked very little.

helped the passengers to a keener ap- and laughter usually his due. drunken music when it played.

on suffering humanity; but one of the pigmies. bevy of pretty girls in blue flannels who range of the band all day.

and, finally, by William Henry.

spray drowned the brazen howls and weary of holding it erect. discords of the band, and lulled them curve and curl silently behind the keel over the river. and mingle with the trail of foam.

plauded occasionally and called for tempted to let it carry him below the stern counted those who stayed as be- but after a while he rolled over and youd redemption.

No boat on the river moved easier caw "Canary Jim" lying on his stomach

HER FIRST EXCURSION RUN, than the New Idlewild. Trimmed with her colors, she was a chipper little creature, shooting through the water Red and black posters were struck off like a little white water sprite in holithree weeks before and had been posted day dress. She always made a pleasing appearance with her pure white passenger deck, trimmed in golden scroll

The passengers were infatuated with fair to make her first excursion run a the dainty salon; it was so perfectly white and so scrupulously clean. When Her captain swore that she was the night came, and the white-liveried neatest boat of her size and class on the waiters turned on the lights, the salon whole Mississippi river; and the mate was a fairy land. Some danced, some assented and swore very hard, and said sang, and some kept up their ceaseless that she was the prettiest little boat the babble until they nearly fell asleep on

There were still others who loved to large gilded anchors swinging between sit outside and watch the search light their smokestacks, sweeping up and go chasing inland, mile after mile. down the river, as if they had a mort- Where it fisshed on the bluffs, they gage on all creation; but they were not seemed like great black mountains, fifty

Down below. on the lower deck, it was never very light. Even when the They were making good time that sun shone fiercest it was bright only in

to keep his name good as the most ac- The freight was piled high; and there commodating steamboatman on the was an odor of stagnant river water, river. So he told the engineer to combined with many odors less pronounced. On this June day the rousta-The firemen were stripped to their bouts were working fast and hard; for waiste; so the little steamer gained the excursionists soon grew impatient if speed in proportion to the flow of the boat stopped too long at a landing smoky perspiration down their white when she loaded or unloaded freight. backs. And as she churned along she And the excursionists had to be pleased. was making as much noise almost, and else the patrons of the Idlewild might shricking with as much audacity as a forsake her for her rival boat—the Mary Morton.

On the glistening upper deck the There was more freight than usual on throng of excursionists was chattering this trip, and the roustabouts did not and twittering away like magpies. gamble between landings, but as soon Snuggled in a few quiet corners as the boat pulled away from shore were the usual number of invalids, old nearly all of them lay down on the grain sacks to sleep until the mate yelled them

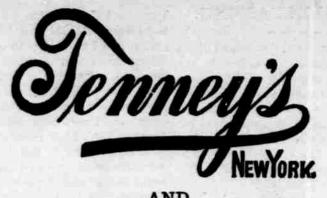
the flowing green panorams, and looked Even "Canary Jim," the blackest, over the water far away-how far, they smallest, toughest of them all, sang alone knew. The cooing doves cooed little, and his usual rollicking cry of and forgot the great river and green "Holla nigga, holls, hoo o hoo!" had bluffs; but they looked volumes and changed to a dismal half song, half said little, while the gabbling crowd chant of, "It's haa'd, haa'd; ha'ad to be paraded the upper deck said volumes be a nigga, nigga, -so ha'ad, and his one . or two attempts at raillery had dismally The wheezy brass band near the bow failed to win the loud applause of shout

preciation of the glorious day-when Occasionally a passenger unaccusthey compared the delicious silence tomed to the river would stand and while it ceased playing to the blaring, watch the roustabouts bear the heavy casks and boxes up to the wharf-house; When the first horn blared and the and if he prided himself as an observer first pipe shrilled, a young college man of men, he would not fail to remark remarked, as he looked sidewise by something about the strangeness of a twisting his eyes: "I don't see where life that made men of such terrible that band gets the 'brass' to inflict itself muscular force the serfs of comparative

As the boat neared the end of this had him in charge threatened-"Now,see trip the roustabouts slept nearly as soon here, William Henry, if you try airing as the gangplank was raised. Lying your brains much more we girls 'll put sprawled out over the piles of heavy you overboard, because we're going to freight they slumbered as if stupified enjoy ourselves." William Henry with- by drugs. At least, they all tried to drew into himself in savage silence- sleep; but there was one among them for about two minutes, when the same who could not. He was the only white girl beckoned to him from a shaded roustabout on board; and for a long corner and asked him if he was so en- time he had hung around the bar, hoptranced that he was going to stand in ing to get another drink. Once he had been a man of superb muscular When the band struck a full cres- force. Even now, one could see a rude endo, she clapped her hands to her pink suggestion of strength in his corded ears and led the way to the etern of neck and hands, and a rent in his greasy the boat, followed by the other girls- cotton shirt showed great ropy muscles over his ribs; but his eyes were dull and There, the singing roar of the chug- his whole body drooped as he shambled ging paddles and the hiss of falling along, as though he had long ago grown

When he felt certain shat he could into dreamy, mellow swells of far away get no more whiskey, he wuched down music, and the pleasure seekers could to the lower deck and lay down on some not tire of watching the smooth water bales of hay, where he could look out

The water was smooth and swift and Some stayed near the band and ap- strong where he looked, and he felt more, but the people who went to the surface, down where he could be cool; faced the boiler trying to sleep. He





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