By Compton Mackenzie

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There was nothing to distinguish the departure of the Murmania from that of any other big liner leaving New York in October for Liverpool or Southampton. At the crowded gangways there was the usual rain of ultimate kisses, from the quayside the usual gale of speeding handkerchiefs. Ladies in blanket-coats handed over to the arrangement of their table-stewards the expensive bouquets presented by friends who, as the case might be, had been glad or sorry to see them go. Middle-aged gentlemen, who were probably not at all conspicuous on shore, at once made their appearance in caps that they might have felt shy about wearing even during their university prime. Children in the first confusion of settling down ate more chocolates from the gift boxes lying about the cabins than they were likely to be given (or perhaps want) for some time. Two young women with fresh complexions, short skirts, tam o shanters, brightly colored jumpers, and big bows to their shoes were already on familiar terms with one of the junior...
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