

**TO SAN
FRANCISCO
AND BACK**

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To San Francisco and back by Harry Jones

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HARRY JONES

**TO SAN
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AND BACK**

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BY THE

REV. HARRY JONES, M.A.,

Prebendary of St. Paul's.

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INTRODUCTION TO THIRD EDITION.



THE difficulties felt in adapting the original form of these letters to a state of things existing only a few years after they were written might, of course, be considered to be more obvious, as a third edition of them is called for. And yet the main features of the impression originally received by the writer are unchanged. There is a hardly perceptible difference even in many details. The stream of emigrants which overflows upon the bank at Castle Garden is much the same. The accommodation "on board" the great trains is rather more widely spread by the increased number of railways than altered or improved on any particular line. Phases of social and government life have undergone no organic change. The army of the United States of America has, it is true, become still smaller, while its navy has nearly disappeared; but the great civic invasion, the process of absorption whereby plains are being populated, and districts moved onwards from the inchoate condi-

tion of territory to that of State, still continues; only, more men are on the march, and more land is invaded.

Indeed, it is in the extension of old conditions that the America of the present day is altered from that of a few years ago. Where one railroad, *e.g.*, traversed Colorado, and the traveller who went into the interior had to travel by a "Concord" coach, some dozen have been laid about the region, and the immigrant enters into its corners by a branch line. The aspects of a frontier city have, meanwhile, not been altered, though they have been enormously multiplied and spread. The curiously mixed and insistent human fringe which precedes the rising human tide has only widened itself and moved onwards. Before it, the plains and mountains are what they were. Behind it, more canvas tents give place to more brick walls, and the plain, instead of being covered with useless coarse grass, bears its precious crop of wheat. It is, indeed, this change which is transforming America, though the transformation is really growth. The prospects of central agricultural failure have indeed hardly been conjectured, except by some who, knowing little or nothing of the soil, talk of its ultimate exhaustion as if it were coming into sight. It is not the question of failing fertility, however remote in the American continent, but the first use of enormous virgin regions which exercises the immigrant and the

governments of the United States and the British possessions. It is true that the writer of these letters has little to say about Canada. He might, however, now remark that much of the energy shown in the development of the States is at present seen across the border, and that the resources of the Dominion are year by year perceived to be much vaster than was realised only a short time ago.

Meanwhile, along with the solid though rapid growth seen over the whole northern continent, the same procedure marks the progress of civilization as has marked it ever since railways became a leading factor in the human march. Thus, letters written since the first great line was laid from the Atlantic to the Pacific necessarily notice features which have by no means become obliterated, but are only enlarged and multiplied in the growing family of the new world household.

TO SAN FRANCISCO AND BACK.



CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE OUT.

THOUGH what forms an agreeable recollection to me revives the memory of wearisome hours to not a few, some of our readers may care to know the impression which an ocean voyage made upon one who had never crossed the Atlantic, or indeed any of the great seas, before. Fortunately for me, I am in one respect a good sailor, and entirely escaped the misery in which the majority of my fellow-passengers passed the first few days of our voyage.

By getting to Liverpool betimes, and immediately going on board the "China" in her tender, which happened to be leaving the landing-stage as I reached it, I secured an early chance of a room to myself—a great luxury, for two berths in a cabin of about eight feet square is close work, especially when shared for some nine or ten days.

We went on board on a Saturday, in a small steamer, another carrying the luggage. The mail came out afterwards in a separate tender. We had a perfectly smooth sail to Queenstown, where we were delayed eleven hours for the last mail from London *via* Holyhead. The long ship lay out in Queenstown Harbour, standing as steady as a pier in the flat water, while a fringe of wailing gulls hung round us for scraps, and showed into what clean and graceful shapes even the garbage of a steamboat may be transformed. But we sorely grudged the delay, as it drew heavily upon our chances of fine weather. At last the mail came off in a tender—eighty-four sacks of letters—and, as soon as this vessel was made fast alongside, was run on board by a train of men as fast as they could trot. We began to move while this process was being carried on. Then our pilot stepped on board the small steamer, which left us. We had still one link left to the Old World, in the shape of a shore boat. This clung to us for some time, probably in hopes of picking up a job in the shape of some forgotten message or parcel.

At last the order came from deck, "Let go!" and though those of our readers who are familiar with the passage to America may smile at my sentiment, it was a touching moment when this last home tie was loosened and the boat fell astern, dancing in the foam of our screw.