

**A TRIP ABROAD.
SKETCHES OF MEN AND
MANNERS, PEOPLE
AND PLACES, IN EUROPE**

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A Trip Abroad. Sketches of Men and Manners, People and Places, in Europe by John E. Ray

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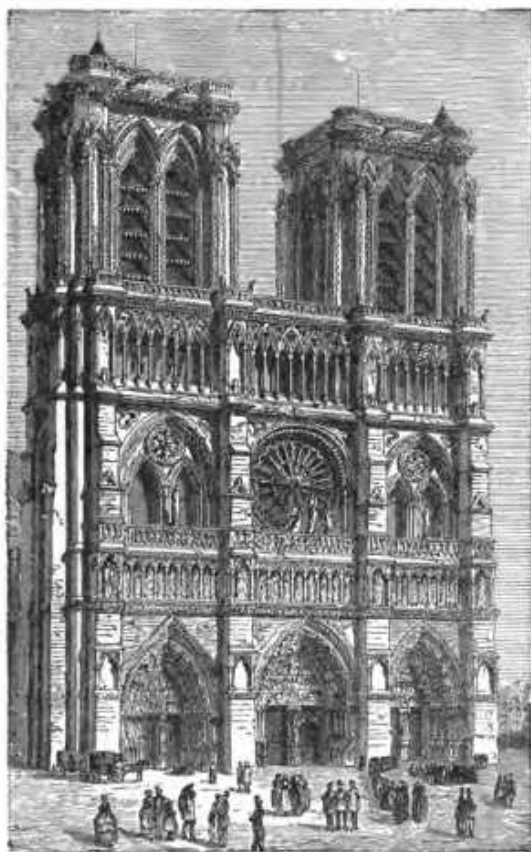
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JOHN E. RAY

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CHURCH OF THE NOTRE DAME, PARIS.

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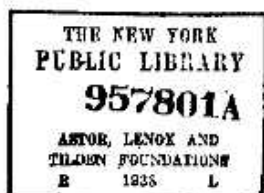
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PREFACE.

I make no apology for the second appearance of the material composing this little volume, save that hundreds of requests, from friends and strangers in this and adjoining States, have urged me to its reproduction. And just here let me state that it is not intended for the *critic's* perusal, but simply for the friendly eye, who, though finding many imperfections, throws the mantle of charity over them all, and receives it, as it is intended by the author, to gratify his many friends, and, may be, to do some good. May God add His blessing to this and the

AUTHOR.

A TRIP ABROAD.

CHAPTER I.

A strong desire for a long time to see the Old World, together with a sense of my need of recreation after a year of hard work, decided me to take a trip to Europe, during my summer vacation in 1880. This desire was enhanced by the large gathering of distinguished Sunday-school workers from all parts of the world at the Sunday-school Centenary, which assembled in London. Accordingly, I started for New York, June 15th, to obtain passage for England. There was so much travel that I found no little difficulty in securing a berth on any of the steamship lines, all of which were crowded. There was, however, one vacancy on the steamer of the Inman line, "City of Montreal," which sailed Thursday, June 17th.

It is a matter of no small interest to notice the number of States and countries represented among the passengers on board a steamship. Besides those from America, including some from North Carolina, New York, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Illinois, New Jersey, Texas, Canada, and perhaps some other States, there are some from England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, Australia, and some other nationalities which do not now occur to me. This variety soon becomes quite monotonous, however, and there is very great need of something to stir us up. But there is one couple on board who affords amusement for all. Everybody else soon becomes acquainted, and it is not long ere we are like one great family.

These two individuals do not know anybody, nor does anybody know them. Judging from appearances, I should

say they are newly married, for they seem to live entirely for themselves, to themselves, and by themselves. But how they ever came to get married is still a mystery to me, except that I remember that there is a law of nature that "*opposites attract*." In appearance, they are as opposite as the poles. He looks to be about fifty, is quite tall and stout and awkward, and—(I don't mean to be personal in my remarks, but)—upon the whole, he reminds me of a Shanghai chicken with the gout. She is very low, pale, thin and slender, and reminds me more of a "*bantam*" in her movements than anything else. And taking them both together, I cannot help thinking of an old hen with one chicken. This, too, soon becomes monotonous, and there is need to look out for something else of interest.

The next thing in order is sea-sickness; for scarcely have we gotten out of sight of land when it becomes my pleasant (?) duty, among many others to "*feed the fish*," or, in other words, to "*pay tribute to Neptune*." I need not remind you that this very quickly becomes monotonous, for it is not long before I am called on for "*tribute*" when the treasury is quite empty. But others do so, and I suppose I must, too. We have splendid weather nearly all the way, it raining only one or two days, and there is but one really foggy day. The moon is approaching the full, and some of the loveliest nights I ever witnessed are given us. It seems a pity to sleep them away.

On the fourth day, the attention of all is directed to an object in the northeast, which we find to be a huge iceberg. The vessel has gone considerably out of its course south to avoid the ice, but this one has strayed off to this great distance. Its beauties in the dazzling sunlight are difficult to portray. With snow-white base and pearly spires, it raises its pinnacles high in the air like angel fingers pointing upward to the throne of Him who is the source of all purity, as if to say;—"The sea is His, and He made it."

Another interesting feature is the vast schools of porpoises

which so often environ the boat in companies of thousands and hundreds of thousands, so that the whole ocean is alive with them for miles and miles,—pitching, jumping, plunging, gliding as if in a rage of fury. Nor can I fail to mention the swarms of stormy petrels, or “Mother Carey’s chickens,” which are to be seen every day while crossing. With untiring wings they flit hither and thither over the waves, like bees among the blossoms of spring, yet never stopping to rest, though from 1,000 to 1,500 miles from land. Numbers of gulls are to be seen, too, out in mid-ocean, but they are quite small, and, when tired, perch upon the waves and float gracefully amidst their foaming caps until rested.

After eleven long days, we see coming to meet us a large gull. This indicates the near approach to land. Nor are we sorry, for one soon becomes satisfied with sea-life. Only a few hours later and the air is full of these beautiful birds, which follow us until we reach Liverpool, picking up the particles of food dropped from the vessel. They are about twice the size of pigeons, and the color of the back varies from that of a light slate or pale brown, to a cream color, very delicate; and the breast is almost snow-white, while the wings are fringed with a velvet-like brown.

At last the welcome sound of “Land! land!!” is heard, and we strain our eyes to see the joyous sight, when the rock-bound shores of “Auld Ireland” comes to view, and we coast along its verdant hills to Queenstown, where the mail is left, and we then go round through the channel to Liverpool, which we reach about five o’clock the next afternoon.

On shipboard I have the good fortune to meet a gentleman, the Rev. W. B. Palmore, of Jefferson City, Mo., a Methodist minister, who, I find, wants to take pretty much the same trip that I do. So we enter into an agreement, map out our route and go together nearly the whole time of my stay.

At Liverpool we have some time to walk around before dark, for, though it is now nine o’clock P. M., one can see very well to read a newspaper without the aid of gas light!

We stroll into the "Walker Art Gallery," where we find a good many paintings of elegance and beauty. The specimens of statuary, too, are very fine, especially a bust of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria. The gong soon sounds, apprising us of the fact that the hour for closing the doors has arrived. We next make our way along one of the principal streets, and seeing an unusually agitated crowd we make our way thither just in time to see the closing scene of a wonderful drama,—two women fighting. Don't know that we ought to feel specially surprised at this, for from the ruddy appearance of every one we meet, we are forced to the conclusion that these are *high-blooded* people.

At 7:20 the next morning, we take the cars for London. What cars!! They are divided into from four to five compartments, each compartment to hold eight or ten persons, one half facing each way, and each compartment separated from the others by a partition reaching to the top of the car. The doors are at the sides of the cars and at the ends of each compartment. We get in, the conductor (or guard, as they call him,) shuts the door, locks us in and takes his departure. We want some water, but there is none to be had, for the cars have none of the conveniences attached to American cars. So we must sit on and tough it out until we reach our destination.

Everything is green! The crops of grain are not yet ripe, and the clover fields are blossoming in their beauty. Even the railroad embankments are terraced, and not a foot of the soil can be seen for the luxuriant growth of grass. The farm-houses are all of brick, the land cultivated to the very topmost pitch of possibility, every available foot being under cultivation. Canals and railroads form a complete net-work in some sections through which we pass, and for the first time in our lives we see a little canal-boat drawn by a horse with a woman as driver. The air is black with the smoke which rises from the almost innumerable manufacturing towns which lie along our way.