

**HOMeward BOUND: OR,
THE CHASE, A
TALE OF THE SEA. IN
TWO VOLUMES. VOL. I**

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JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

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Coopers novels. Ser. 2. no. 5,
HOMeward BOUND:

OR,

THE CHASE.

A TALE OF THE SEA.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "THE PILOT," "THE SPY," ETC.

"Is't not strange, Canidius,
That from Tarentum, and Brundisium,
He could so quickly cut the Ionian sea,
And take in Turkey!"

SHAKESPEARE

IN TWO VOLUMES.

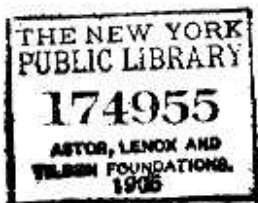
VOL. I.

A NEW EDITION.

**PHILADELPHIA:
LEA & BLANCHARD.**

1842.

E. S. P.



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PREFACE.

In one respect, this book is a parallel to Franklin's well-known apologue of the hatter and his sign. It was commenced with a sole view to exhibit the present state of society in the United States, through the agency, in part, of a set of characters with different peculiarities, who had freshly arrived from Europe, and to whom the distinctive features of the country would be apt to present themselves with greater force, than to those who had never lived beyond the influence of the things portrayed. By the original plan, the work was to open at the threshold of the country, or with the arrival of the travellers, at Sandy Hook, from which point the tale was to have been carried regularly forward to its conclusion. But a consultation with others has left little more of this plan than the hatter's friends left of his sign. As a vessel was introduced in the first chapter, the cry was for "more ship," until the work has become "all ship;" it actually closing at, or near, the spot where it was originally intended it should commence. Owing to this diversion from the author's design—a design that lay at the bottom of all his projects—a necessity has been created of running the tale through two separate works, or of making a

hurried and insufficient conclusion. The former scheme has, consequently, been adopted.

It is hoped that the interest of the narrative will not be essentially diminished by this arrangement.

There will be, very likely, certain imaginative persons, who will feel disposed to deny that every minute event mentioned in these volumes ever befell one and the same ship, though ready enough to admit that they may very well have occurred to several different ships; a mode of commenting that is much in favour with your small critic. To this objection, we shall make but a single answer. The caviller, if any there should prove to be, is challenged to produce the log-book of the *Montauk*, London packet, and if it should be found to contain a single sentence to controvert any one of our statements or facts, a frank recantation shall be made. Captain Truck is quite as well known in New York as in London or Portsmouth, and to him also we refer with confidence, for a confirmation of all we have said, with the exception, perhaps, of the little occasional touches of character that may allude directly to himself. In relation to the latter, Mr. Leach, and particularly Mr. Saunders, are both invoked as unimpeachable witnesses.

Most of our readers will probably know that all which appears in a New York journal is not necessarily as true as the Gospel. As some slight deviations from the facts accidentally occur, though doubtless at very long intervals, it should not be surprising that they sometimes omit circumstances that are quite as veracious as anything they do actually utter to the world. No argument, therefore, can justly be urged against the incidents of this story, on account of the

circumstance of their not being embodied in the regular marine news of the day.

Another serious objection on the part of the American reader to this work is foreseen. The author has endeavoured to interest his readers in occurrences of a date as antiquated as two years can make them, when he is quite aware, that, in order to keep pace with a state of society in which there was no yesterday, it would have been much safer to anticipate things, by laying his scene two years in advance. It is hoped, however, that the public sentiment will not be outraged by this glimpse at antiquity, and this the more so, as the sequel of the tale will bring down events within a year of the present moment.

Previously to the appearance of that sequel, however, it may be well to say a few words concerning the fortunes of some of our *characters*, as it might be *en attendant*.

To commence with the most important: the *Montauk* herself, once deemed so "splendid" and convenient, is already supplanted in the public favour by a new ship; the reign of a popular packet, a popular preacher, or a popular anything-else, in America, being limited by a national *esprit de corps*, to a time materially shorter than that of a lustre. This, however, is no more than just; rotation in favour being as evidently a matter of constitutional necessity, as rotation in office.

Captain Truck, for a novelty, continues popular, a circumstance that he himself ascribes to the fact of his being still a bachelor.

Toast is promoted, figuring at the head of a pantry quite equal to that of his great master, who regards

his improvement with some such eyes as Charles the Twelfth of Sweden regarded that of his great rival Peter, after the affair of Pultowa.

Mr. Leach now smokes his own cigar, and issues his own orders from a monkey rail, his place in the line being supplied by his former "Dickey." He already speaks of his great model, as of one a little antiquated, it is true, but as a man who had merit in his time, though it was not the particular merit that is in fashion to-day.

Notwithstanding these little changes, which are perhaps inseparable from the events of a period so long as two years in a country as energetic as America, and in which nothing seems to be stationary but the ages of Tontine nominees and three-life leases, a cordial esteem was created among the principal actors in the events of this book, which is likely to outlast the passage, and which will not fail to bring most of them together again in the sequel.

April, 1838.

HOMeward BOUND.

CHAPTER I.

An inner room I have,
Where thou shalt rest and some refreshment take,
And then we will more fully talk of this.

ORA.

THE coast of England, though infinitely finer than our own, is more remarkable for its verdure, and for a general appearance of civilisation, than for its natural beauties. The chalky cliffs may seem bold and noble to the American, though compared to the granite piles that buttress the Mediterranean they are but mole-hills; and the travelled eye seeks beauties instead, in the retiring vales, the leafy hedges, and the clustering towns that dot the teeming island. Neither is Portsmouth a very favourable specimen of a British port, considered solely in reference to the picturesque. A town situated on a humble point, and fortified after the manner of the Low Countries, with an excellent haven, suggests more images of the useful than of the pleasing; while a background of modest receding hills offers little beyond the verdant swales of the country. In this respect England itself has the fresh beauty of youth, rather than the mellowed hues of a more advanced period of life; or it might be better to say, it has the young freshness and retiring sweetness that distinguish her females, as compared with the warmer tints of Spain and Italy, and which, women and landscape alike, need the near view to be appreciated.