

**THE COMPANION
SERIES. BY
LAND AND SEA**

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The Companion Series. By Land and Sea by Various

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By Land and Sea



1900

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LONDON.

LONDON.

We travel from Liverpool to London in one of the saloon-carriages which are attached to all important trains, and in which all passengers holding first-class tickets are allowed to ride without extra charge.

In the middle of the car is a large drawing-room, with small reading tables between the softly upholstered seats, and at each end there is a large compartment, one reserved exclusively for gentlemen and the other for ladies. There are separate dressing-rooms of a much larger size than those in the Pullman cars, and the fittings are of the most ingenious description. Wherever one may be in the car an electric bell is within reach, and a touch brings to our side a civil attendant politely asking what he can do for us.

If the passengers want luncheon, they are provided for three shillings with a little basket containing a napkin, knife and fork, condiments, bread and butter, a hot chop, or half a cold chicken.

In this luxurious fashion, with an ever-changing landscape framed in the window of the car, we rush along, at the rate of fifty miles an hour, through the garden-like fields and past the red-tiled villages, the ivy-mantled churches and the ancestral parks; it is like Arcadia and everything seems to breathe of contentment and prosperity.

Only two stops are made between Liverpool and London, a distance of two hundred and one miles, and in four hours and a half we are at the end of our journey and in London, the most wonderful of cities, which becomes more and more wonderful as one's knowledge of it increases.

The first thing we realize on reaching London is noise, and the second thing is smoke. The houses and buildings are as black as if they were draped in crape, and the air is full of floating particles of soot. We see with dismay the new

summer hats that we have brought from America growing dingy and brown an hour or two after our arrival, and at the end of a day or two our new summer suits are spoiled.

Although it is July, and the weather is hot, all the men are dressed in black, and the straw hat and light felt hat are scarcely ever worn. Black is, indeed, the only suitable color for clothing, and if the skin were black also it would be more appropriate than white.

We have to visit the wash-bowl once, at least, in every three hours if we have been out-of-doors, and we stare aghast at the water after we have used it; it is as inky as if a chimney-sweep or a blacksmith had taken a bath in it. The face collects specks of the soot, and unless the hands are constantly gloved they, too, become Ethiopian.

At nearly every corner there is a crossing-sweeper, sometimes a boy or a girl, sometimes an old man or a woman, who lives by the pennies and halfpennies which the pedestrians drop as they pass. The sweeper touches his hat to every one who hurries by, but it is seldom that he is rewarded by a coin. One sweeper will occupy the same crossing from day to day, year in and year out, and his claim to it is recognized by other sweepers.

There are many street occupations which we never see in America, and the aim of nearly all of them is the much-needed penny.

Ragged street-Arabs follow the omnibuses and cabs, and turn running somersaults while beseeching the passengers to give them a penny. When the tide is out, great banks of black and oozy mud are exposed under the bridges which cross the Thames, and half-naked boys wallow in the mire, groping for the pennies which some silly people throw for the amusement of seeing the little fellows begrime themselves.

The hansom cab is the most comfortable of vehicles, and it is strange that it has not been adopted more widely in the United States; its motion is easy, and as the passenger sits facing the horse, he has a complete view of everything passing. It is driven at a high rate of speed, and in twenty minutes we

reach the old tavern at Charing Cross, at the door of which Mr. Pickwick had his famous dispute with the cabman of old.

Other English hotels have been modernized and Americanized, but this is as old-fashioned as ever. We do not "register," and we are not greeted by any bejewelled clerk. When we enter the hall, we go up to a large window with small panes, which screens a very cozy sitting-room, wherein we find the landlady and her assistants, all of whom are attractive-looking young women, and there a bedchamber is assigned to us.

Such a bedchamber! The very room, perchance, in which Mr. Pickwick found himself with his unwelcome companion; for here is a four-post bed, with heavy curtains, and all the furniture is so dingy that its proper place would be a curiosity-shop, or a museum of antiquities.

W. H. RIDING.



In Westminster Abbey.

I fear that on entering the Abbey you will at first be greatly disappointed. The grimy, dingy look of the place will vex you, particularly if you choose for your visit a dull day. I grieve to say that the dinginess is inevitable. The Abbey rears its towers into an atmosphere thick with the smoke of innumerable chimneys, and laden with acids which eat away, with increasing rapidity, the surface of its stones.

And yet, as you enter the cathedral which enshrines memorials of nine centuries of English history—as you pass under the roof which covers more immortal dust than any other in the whole world—you can hardly fail to feel some sense of awe. And before you begin to study the cathedral in detail, I should advise you to wander through the length and breadth of it without paying any attention to minor points but with the single object of recognizing its exquisite beauty and magnificence.

You will best understand its magnificence as a place of worship if you visit it on any Sunday afternoon, and see the choir and transepts crowded from end to end by perhaps three thousand people, among whom you will observe hundreds of young men, contented to stand through the whole of a long service and to listen with no sign of weariness to a sermon which perhaps occupies an hour in the delivery.

Here the Puritan divines thundered against the errors of Rome; here the Romish preachers anathematized the apostasies of Luther. These walls have heard the voice of Cranmer as he preached before the boy-king on whom he rested the hopes of the Reformation, and the voice of Feckenham as he preached before Philip of Spain and Mary Tudor. They have heard South shooting the envenomed arrows of his wit against the Independents, and Baxter pleading the cause of toleration. They have heard Bishop Bonner chanting the