

**AMONG THE
AMERICANS AND A
STRANGER IN AMERICA**

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Among the Americans and a stranger in America by George Jacob Holyoake

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BY GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

"He ties up hands
Who locks up lands:
The lands which can't be sold and bought
Bring men and States to worse than nought:
The lands which can be freely sold
Are worth a world of barren gold."

—EENEZER ELLIOTT.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	I.—Sea Ways and Sea Society.....	17
CHAPTER	II.—Courtesies of New York.....	31
CHAPTER	III.—The Republican Convention at Saratoga....	47
CHAPTER	IV.—Propagandist Uses of Interviewing.....	55
CHAPTER	V.—Men of Action in Boston.....	69
CHAPTER	VI.—City of Holyoke — Discourses in Free Churches.....	87
CHAPTER	VII.—Wanderings in Five Great Cities.....	95
CHAPTER	VIII.—American Orators — Wendell Phillips, Col. R. G. Ingersoll, and George W. Curtis....	111
CHAPTER	IX.—Famous Preachers—Henry Ward Beecher, Robert Coilyer, and Prof. Felix Adler....	121
CHAPTER	X.—Co-operation in the New World.....	133
CHAPTER	XI.—State Socialism in America.....	143
CHAPTER	XII.—Co-operative Emigration—Visits to the Pre- mier of Canada and President of America.	153
CHAPTER	XIII.—Wayside Incidents.....	163
CHAPTER	XIV.—Manners and Opinions in America.....	183
CHAPTER	XV.—Emigrant Education.....	195
	A Stranger in America, from the "Nine- teenth Century.".....	209

PREFACE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

The portion of these pages entitled "Among the Americans," was written for the Manchester "Co-operative News." Messrs. Belford, Clarke & Co. do me the honor to reprint these papers here, together with the article contributed to the "Nineteenth Century," entitled, "A Stranger in America," and they have generously and voluntarily agreed to give me a fair share of the profits that may accrue therefrom. As they are pleased to think the papers will interest the American people, among whom I spent happy months, I should feel indebted to them did no advantage come to me thereby. I will not conceal that their honorable offer does not decrease my satisfaction; and I have to acknowledge that the "New York Tribune" and the "Index," of Boston, which has published passages from these Chapters, have treated me in the same handsome manner.

John Bull, in his solid, bovine way, does make steady progress after his kind. But his dietary, consisting of precedents, is not very stimulating, and he takes a long time chewing the cud of progress. Like the oxen of Cuyp, he stands meditating over the hedge of his verdant little island, looking as though he was going to think: but he is so long about it that the spectator never feels sure that he does it.

If anybody in England proposes to do a new thing, everybody exclaims, like Lord Melbourne, "Can you not let it alone? If you do

it everybody will do it." But everybody does not do it. England is a country where nothing leads to anything, and anything leads to nothing.

Three centuries ago the Reformation broke out, when it was predicted that everybody would come to have ideas of his own. A few new creeds flew into the air and alighted upon ledges in the old rocks of opinion, where they have nestled in inadvertent content, and the groves of thought have seldom since been enlivened by new brightness of plumage or cheered by varieties of song. The republican equality and the republican freedom of America, with their infinite incentives and fertility of aspirations, were to me as a land of new color and new notes, where the minds of the people, like keyless watches, wind themselves up and always keep going. I should have been glad to live there for years, so as to write about it; as it is, I content myself with relating a few of the things which I noticed.

It is not intended that these papers, now collected into a book form, should be regarded as a "book upon America." That would be a very absurd pretension. These pages are the story of nearly four months travel, and if I had been in America four years I should not think myself competent to write a "book about America." Only an ex-President could write that in a complete way. When I returned home my friends naturally asked me what I thought of a country I had never seen before. What I have written is what I told them. It is a mere fireside story of what interested me.

G. J. H.

NEWCASTLE CHAMBERS, }
Essex St., Temple Bar. }

London, April, 1881.

AMONG THE AMERICANS.

CHAPTER I.

SEA WAYS AND SEA SOCIETY.

IN England we have sea-side books. My friend, the late George Henry Lewes, who wrote upon most things better than many men of mark write upon any one, wrote a charming sea-side book. But I never remember to have seen a sea-book. A man who has made many voyages in different vessels to the chief countries of the world, might supply a very useful and popular book, teaching the voyager what to expect and what to avoid. All I knew was that mathematically the least motion occurred in midship. That even sickness must have its conditions—that temperance in eating and drinking was likely to answer upon sea as well as upon land; and that resting horizontally after meals had its advantages, and that lemon and biscuit (if hunger occurred in the early morning) were useful. Sickness did not occur to me, although we had head-winds outward and homeward each voyage, which delayed us nearly two days each way. I spent an idle week in Liverpool before setting

out, and another in New York before returning, as being perfectly rested before a voyage sickness itself would be less fatiguing. I could write a little manual about ship experience as far as I acquired it; but it would be absurd and misleading to many without further knowledge of different kinds of ships, varying seas, and vicissitude of storm, climate, and shipwreck—the last I have not tried. Only one rule may be mentioned here, which I observed in America as well as on the sea. Being in new climates and in new cities, of whose sanitary condition I knew nothing, I trusted to temperance in eating, to temperance in fatigue and in exposure, for security in health, and found it. I have observed that excitement, worry, or fatigue, whether of pain or pleasure, alike pave the way to illness.

I selected the Cunard line because I knew less of the habits of other vessels. This line has lost two ships, but during forty years it is reputed not to have lost a passenger. This furnishes a sense of security which is very profitable to the line, and diminishes the sickness among many voyagers. Travellers, however, have assured me that more space and comfort are to be found in the ships of some other lines. The Cunards travel in a prescribed path, and have the merit of not caring to outrace other vessels, and will even take a day or two longer rather than incur risk. They act upon the principle that it is better for passengers to be late than be lost. Good imagination is a powerful quality at sea. Many passengers become sick by suffering their eyes to rest upon the waves, as the sea appears to mount and fall around them. I was surprised to find that the officers and sailors of the Cunard ships, to whose skill and