

# **COBB IRVIN SHREWSBURY**

EUROPE REVISED

Irvin Cobb

**Europe Revised**

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# **Irvin S. Cobb**

## **Europe Revised**

### **Chapter I. We Are Going Away From Here**

#### **Foreword**

It has always seemed to me that the principal drawback about the average guidebook is that it is over-freighted with facts. Guidebooks heretofore have made a specialty of facts—have abounded in them; facts to be found on every page and in every paragraph. Reading such a work, you imagine that the besotted author said to himself, "I will just naturally fill this thing chock-full of facts"—and then went and did so to the extent of a prolonged debauch.

Now personally I would be the last one in the world to decry facts as such. In the abstract I have the highest opinion of them. But facts, as someone has said, are stubborn things; and stubborn things, like stubborn people, are frequently tiresome. So it occurred to me that possibly there might be room for a guidebook on foreign travel which would not have a single indubitable fact concealed anywhere about its person. I have even dared to hope there might be an actual demand on the part of the general public for such a guidebook. I shall endeavor to meet that desire—if it exists.

While we are on the subject I wish to say there is probably not a statement made by me here or hereafter which cannot readily be controverted. Communications from parties desiring to controvert this or that assertion will be considered in the order received. The line forms on the left and parties will kindly avoid crowding. Triflers and professional controverters save stamps.

With these few introductory remarks we now proceed to the first subject, which is *The Sea: Its Habits and Peculiarities, and the Quaint Creatures Found upon Its Bosom*.

From the very start of this expedition to Europe I labored under a misapprehension. Everybody told me that as soon as I had got my sea legs I would begin to love the sea with a vast and passionate love. As a matter of fact I experienced no trouble whatever in getting my sea legs. They were my regular legs, the same ones I use on land. It was my sea stomach that caused all the bother. First I was afraid I should not get it, and that worried me no little. Then I got it and was regretful. However, that detail will come up later in a more suitable place. I am concerned now with the departure.

Somewhere forward a bugle blares; somewhere rearward a bell jangles. On the deck overhead is a scurry of feet. In the mysterious bowels of the ship a mighty mechanism opens its metal mouth and speaks out briskly. Later it will talk on steadily, with a measured and a regular voice; but now it is heard frequently, yet intermittently, like the click of a blind man's cane. Beneath your feet the ship, which has seemed until this moment as solid as a rock, stirs the least little bit, as though it had waked up. And now a shiver runs all through it and you are reminded of that passage from *Pygmalion and Galatea* where Pygmalion says with such feeling:

She starts; she moves; she seems to feel the thrill of life along her keel.

You are under way. You are finally committed to the great adventure. The necessary good-bys have already been said. Those who in the goodness of their hearts came to see you off have departed for shore, leaving sundry suitable and unsuitable gifts behind. You have examined your stateroom, with its hot and cold decorations, its running stewardess, its all-night throb service, and its windows overlooking the Hudson—a stateroom that seemed so large and commodious until you put one small submissive steamer trunk and two scared valises in it. You are tired, and yon white bed, with the high mudguards on it, looks mighty good to you; but you feel that you must go on deck to wave a fond farewell to the land you love and the friends you are leaving behind.

You fight your way to the open through companionways full of frenzied persons who are apparently trying to travel in every direction at once. On the deck the illusion persists that it is the dock that is moving and the ship that is standing still. All about you your fellow passengers crowd the rails, waving and shouting messages to the people on the dock; the people on the dock wave back and shout answers. About every other person is begging somebody to tell auntie to be sure to write. You gather that auntie will be expected to write weekly, if not oftener.

As the slice of dark water between boat and dock widens, those who are left behind begin running toward the pierhead in such numbers that each wide, bright-lit door-opening in turn suggests a flittering section of a moving-picture film. The only perfectly calm person in sight is a gorgeous, gold-laced creature standing on the outermost gunwale of the dock, wearing the kind of uniform that a rear admiral of the Swiss navy would wear—if the Swiss had any navy—and holding a speaking trumpet in his hand. This person is not excited, for he sends thirty-odd-thousand-ton ships off to Europe at frequent intervals, and so he is impressively and importantly blasé about it; but everybody else is excited. You find yourself rather that way. You wave at persons you know and then at persons you do not know.

You continue to wave until the man alongside you, who has spent years of his life learning to imitate a siren whistle with his face, suddenly twines his hands about his mouth and lets go a terrific blast right in your ear. Something seems to warn you that you are not going to care for this man.

The pier, ceasing to be a long, outstretched finger, seems to fold back into itself, knuckle-fashion, and presently is but a part of the oddly foreshortened shoreline, distinguishable only by the black dot of watchers clustered under a battery of lights, like a swarm of hiving bees. Out in midstream the tugs, which have been convoying the ship, let go of her and scuttle off, one in this direction and one in that, like a brace of teal ducks getting out of a walrus' way.

Almost imperceptibly her nose straightens down the river and soon on the starboard quarter—how quickly one picks up these nautical terms!—looming through the harbor mists, you behold the statue of Miss Liberty, in her popular specialty of enlightening the world. So you go below and turn in. Anyway, that is what I did; for certain of the larger ships of the Cunard line sail at midnight or even later, and this was such a ship.

For some hours I lay awake, while above me and below me and all about me the boat settled down to her ordained ship's job, and began drawing the long, soothing snores that for five days and nights she was to continue drawing without cessation. There were so many things to think over. I tried to remember all the authoritative and conflicting advice that had been offered to me by traveled friends and well-wishers.

Let's see, now: On shipboard I was to wear only light clothes, because nobody ever caught cold at sea. I was to wear the heaviest clothes I had, because the landlubber always caught cold at sea. I was to tip only those who served me. I was to tip all hands in moderation, whether they served me or not. If I felt squeamish I was to do the following things: Eat something. Quit eating. Drink something. Quit drinking. Stay on deck. Go below and lie perfectly flat. Seek company. Avoid same. Give it up. Keep it down.

There was but one point on which all of them were agreed. On no account should I miss Naples; I must see Naples if I did not see another solitary thing in Europe. Well, I did both—I saw Naples; and now I should not miss Naples if I never saw it again, and I do not think I shall. As regards the other suggestions these friends of mine gave me, I learned in time that all of them were right and all of them were wrong.

For example, there was the matter of a correct traveling costume. Between seasons on the Atlantic one wears what best pleases one. One sees at the same time women in furs and summer boys in white ducks. Tweed-enshrouded Englishmen and linen-clad American girls promenade together, giving to the decks that pleasing air of variety and individuality of apparel only to be found in southern California during the winter, and in those orthodox pictures in the book of Robinson Crusoe, where



Robinson is depicted as completely wrapped up in goatskins, while Man Friday is pirouetting round as nude as a raw oyster and both of them are perfectly comfortable. I used to wonder how Robinson and Friday did it. Since taking an ocean trip I understand perfectly. I could do it myself now.

There certainly were a lot of things to think over. I do not recall now exactly the moment when I ceased thinking them over. A blank that was measurable by hours ensued. I woke from a dream about a scrambled egg, in which I was the egg, to find that morning had arrived and the ship was behaving naughtily.

Here was a ship almost as long as Main Street is back home, and six stories high, with an English basement; with restaurants and elevators and retail stores in her; and she was as broad as a courthouse; and while lying at the dock she had appeared to be about the most solid and dependable thing in creation—and yet in just a few hours' time she had altered her whole nature, and was rolling and sliding and charging and snorting like a warhorse. It was astonishing in the extreme, and you would not have expected it of her.

Even as I focused my mind on this phenomenon the doorway was stealthily entered by a small man in a uniform that made him look something like an Eton schoolboy and something like a waiter in a dairy lunch. I was about to have the first illuminating experience with an English manservant. This was my bedroom steward, by name Lubly—William Lubly. My hat is off to William Lubly—to him and to all his kind. He was always on duty; he never seemed to sleep; he was always in a good humor, and he always thought of the very thing you wanted just a moment or two before you thought of it yourself, and came a-running and fetched it to you. Now he was softly stealing in to close my port. As he screwed the round, brass-faced window fast he glanced my way and caught my apprehensive eye.

"Good morning, sir," he said, and said it in such a way as to convey a subtle compliment.

"Is it getting rough outside?" I said—I knew about the inside. "Thank you," he said; "the sea 'as got up a bit, sir—thank you, sir."

I was gratified—nay more, I was flattered. And it was so delicately done too. I really did not have the heart to tell him that I was not solely responsible—that I had, so to speak, collaborators; but Lubly stood ready always to accord me a proper amount of recognition for everything that happened on that ship. Only the next day, I think it was, I asked him where we were. This occurred on deck. He had just answered a lady who wanted to know whether we should have good weather on the day we landed at Fishguard and whether we should get in on time. Without a moment's hesitation he told her; and then he turned to me with the air of giving credit where credit is due, and said:

"Thank you, sir—we are just off the Banks, thank you."

Lubly ran true to form. The British serving classes are ever like that, whether met with at sea or on their native soil. They are a great and a noble institution. Give an English servant a kind word and he thanks you. Give him a harsh word and he still thanks you. Ask a question of a London policeman—he tells you fully and then he thanks you. Go into an English shop and buy something—the clerk who serves you thanks you with enthusiasm. Go in and fail to buy something—he still thanks you, but without the enthusiasm.

One kind of Englishman says Thank you, sir; and one kind—the Cockney who has been educated—says Thens; but the majority brief it into a short but expressive expletive and merely say: Kew. Kew is the commonest word in the British Isles. Strordinary runs it a close second, but Kew comes first. You hear it everywhere. Hence Kew Gardens; they are named for it.

All the types that travel on a big English-owned ship were on ours. I take it that there is a requirement in the maritime regulations to the effect that the set must be complete before a ship may put to sea. To begin with, there was a member of a British legation from somewhere going home on leave, for a holiday, or a funeral. At least I heard it was a holiday, but I should have said he was going home for the other occasion. He wore an Honorable attached to the front of his name and carried several extra initials behind in the rumble; and he was filled up with that true British reserve which

a certain sort of Britisher always develops while traveling in foreign lands. He was upward of seven feet tall, as the crow flies, and very thin and rigid.

Viewing him, you got the impression that his framework all ran straight up and down, like the wires in a bird cage, with barely enough perches extending across from side to side to keep him from caving in and crushing the canaries to death. On second thought I judge I had better make this comparison in the singular number—there would not have been room in him for more than one canary.

Every morning for an hour, and again every afternoon for an hour, he marched solemnly round and round the promenade deck, always alone and always with his mournful gaze fixed on the far horizon. As I said before, however, he stood very high in the air, and it may have been he feared, if he ever did look down at his feet, he should turn dizzy and be seized with an uncontrollable desire to leap off and end all; so I am not blaming him for that.

He would walk his hour out to the sixtieth second of the sixtieth minute and then he would sit in his steamer chair, as silent as a glacier and as inaccessible as one. If it were afternoon he would have his tea at five o'clock and then, with his soul still full of cracked ice, he would go below and dress for dinner; but he never spoke to anyone. His steamer chair was right-hand chair to mine and often we practically touched elbows; but he did not see me once.

I had a terrible thought. Suppose now, I said to myself—just suppose that this ship were to sink and only we two were saved; and suppose we were cast away on a desert island and spent years and years there, never knowing each other's name and never mingling together socially until the rescue ship came along—and not even then unless there was some mutual acquaintance aboard her to introduce us properly! It was indeed a frightful thought! It made me shudder.

Among our company was a younger son going home after a tour of the Colonies—Canada and Australia, and all that sort of bally rot. I believe there is always at least one younger son on every well-conducted English boat; the family keeps him on a remittance and seems to feel easier in its mind when he is traveling. The British statesman who said the sun never sets on British possessions spoke the truth, but the reporters in committing his memorable utterance to paper spelt the keyword wrong—undoubtedly he meant the other kind—the younger kind.

This particular example of the species was in every way up to grade and sample. A happy combination of open air, open pores and open casegoods gave to his face the exact color of a slice of rare roast beef; it also had the expression of one. With a dab of English mustard in the lobe of one ear and a savory bit of watercress stuck in his hair for a garnish, he could have passed anywhere for a slice of cold roast beef.

He was reasonably exclusive too. Not until the day we landed did he and the Honorable member of the legation learn—quite by chance—that they were third cousins—or something of that sort—to one another. And so, after the relationship had been thoroughly established through the kindly offices of a third party, they fraternized to the extent of riding up to London on the same boat-train, merely using different compartments of different carriages. The English aristocrat is a tolerably social animal when traveling; but, at the same time, he does not carry his sociability to an excess. He shows restraint.

Also, we had with us the elderly gentleman of impaired disposition, who had crossed thirty times before and was now completing his thirty-first trip, and getting madder and madder about it every minute. I saw him only with his clothes on; but I should say, speaking offhand, that he had at least fourteen rattles and a button. His poison sacs hung 'way down. Others may have taken them for dewlaps, but I knew better; they were poison sacs.

It was quite apparent that he abhorred the very idea of having to cross to Europe on the same ocean with the rest of us, let alone on the same ship. And for persons who were taking their first trip abroad his contempt was absolutely unutterable; he choked at the bare mention of such a criminal's name and offense. You would hear him communing with himself and a Scotch and soda.



"Bah!" he would say bitterly, addressing the soda-bottle. "These idiots who've never been anywhere talking about this being rough weather! Rough weather, mind you! Bah! People shouldn't be allowed to go to sea until they know something about it. Bah!"

By the fourth day out his gums were as blue as indigo, and he was so swelled up with his own venom he looked dropsical. I judged his bite would have caused death in from twelve to fourteen minutes, preceded by coma and convulsive rigors. We called him old Colonel Gila Monster or Judge Stinging Lizard, for short.

There was the spry and conversational gentleman who looked like an Englishman, but was of the type commonly denominated in our own land as breezy. So he could not have been an Englishman. Once in a while there comes along an Englishman who is windy, and frequently you meet one who is drafty; but there was never a breezy Englishman yet.

With that interest in other people's business which the close communion of a ship so promptly breeds in most of us, we fell to wondering who and what he might be; but the minute the suspect came into the salon for dinner the first night out I read his secret at a glance. He belonged to a refined song-and-dance team doing sketches in vaudeville. He could not have been anything else—he had jet buttons on his evening clothes.

There was the young woman—she had elocutionary talents, it turned out afterward, and had graduated with honors from a school of expression—who assisted in getting up the ship's concert and then took part in it, both of those acts being mistakes on her part, as it proved.

And there was the official he-beauty of the ship. He was without a wrinkle in his clothes—or his mind either; and he managed to maneuver so that when he sat in the smoking room he always faced a mirror. That was company enough for him. He never grew lonely or bored then. Only one night he discovered something wrong about one of his eyebrows. He gave a pained start; and then, oblivious of those of us who hovered about enjoying the spectacle, he spent a long time working with the blemish. The eyebrow was stubborn, though, and he just couldn't make it behave; so he grew petulant and fretful, and finally went away to bed in a huff. Had it not been for fear of stopping his watch, I am sure he would have slapped himself on the wrist.

This fair youth was one of the delights of the voyage. One felt that if he had merely a pair of tweezers and a mustache comb and a hand glass he would never, never be at a loss for a solution of the problem that worries so many writers for the farm journals—a way to spend the long winter evenings pleasantly.

## **Chapter II. My Bonny Lies over the Ocean—Lies and Lies and Lies**

Of course, we had a bridal couple and a troupe of professional deep-sea fishermen aboard. We just naturally had to have them. Without them, I doubt whether the ship could have sailed. The bridal couple were from somewhere in the central part of Ohio and they were taking their honeymoon tour; but, if I were a bridal couple from the central part of Ohio and had never been to sea before, as was the case in this particular instance, I should take my honeymoon ashore and keep it there. I most certainly should! This couple of ours came aboard billing and cooing to beat the lovebirds. They made it plain to all that they had just been married and were proud of it. Their baggage was brand-new, and the groom's shoes were shiny with that pristine shininess which, once destroyed, can never be restored; and the bride wore her going-and-giving-away outfit.

Just prior to sailing and on the morning after they were all over the ship. Everywhere you went you seemed to meet them and they were always wrestling. You entered a quiet side passage—there they were, exchanging a kiss—one of the long-drawn, deep-siphoned, sirupy kind. You stepped into the writing room thinking to find it deserted, and at sight of you they broke grips and sprang apart, eyeing you like a pair of startled fawns surprised by the cruel huntsman in a forest glade. At all other times, though, they had eyes but for each other.

A day came, however—and it was the second day out—when they were among the missing. For two days and two nights, while the good ship floundered on the tempestuous bosom of the overwrought ocean, they were gone from human ken. On the afternoon of the third day, the sea being calmer now, but still sufficiently rough to satisfy the most exacting, a few hardy and convalescent souls sat in a shawl-wrapped row on the lee side of the ship.

There came two stewards, bearing with them pillows and blankets and rugs. These articles were disposed to advantage in two steamer chairs. Then the stewards hurried away; but presently they reappeared, dragging the limp and dangling forms of the bridal couple from the central part of Ohio. But oh, my countrymen, what a spectacle! And what a change from what had been!

The going-away gown was wrinkled, as though worn for a period of time by one suddenly and sorely stricken in the midst of health. The bride's once well-coifed hair hung in lank disarray about a face that was the color of prime old sage cheese—yellow, with a fleck of green here and there—and in her wan and rolling eye was the hunted look of one who hears something unpleasant stirring a long way off and fears it is coming this way.

Side by side the stewards stretched them prone on their chairs and tucked them in. Her face was turned from him. For some time both of them lay there without visible signs of life—just two muffled, misery-stricken heaps. Then, slowly and languidly, the youth stretched forth an arm from his wrappings and fingered the swaddling folds that enveloped the form of his beloved.

It may have been he thought it was about time to begin picking the coverlid, or it may have been the promptings of reawakened romance, once more feebly astir within his bosom. At any rate, gently and softly, his hand fell on the rug about where her shoulder ought to be. She still had life enough left in her to shake it off—and she did. Hurt, he waited a moment, then caressed her again. "Stop that!" she cried in a low but venomous tone. "Don't you dare touch me!"

So he touched her no more, but only lay there mute and motionless; and from his look one might plumb the sorrows of his soul and know how shocked he was, and how grieved and heartstricken! Love's young dream was o'er! He had thought she loved him, but now he knew better. Their marriage had been a terrible mistake and he would give her back her freedom; he would give it back to her as soon as he was able to sit up. Thus one interpreted his expression.

On the day we landed, however, they were seen again. We were nosing northward through a dimpled duckpond of a sea, with the Welsh coast on one side and Ireland just over the way. People who had not been seen during the voyage came up to breathe, wearing the air of persons who had just returned from the valley of the shadow and were mighty glad to be back; and with those others came our bridal couple.

I inadvertently stumbled on them in an obscure companionway. Their cheeks again wore the bloom of youth and health, and they were in a tight clinch; it was indeed a pretty sight. Love had returned on roseate pinions and the honeymoon had been resumed at the point where postponed on account of bad weather.

They had not been seasick, though. I heard them say so. They had been indisposed, possibly from something they had eaten; but they had not been seasick. Well, I had my own periods of indisposition going over; and if it had been seasickness I should not hesitate a moment about coming right out and saying so. In these matters I believe in being absolutely frank and aboveboard. For the life of me I cannot understand why people will dissemble and lie about this thing of being seasick. To me their attitude is a source of constant wonderment.

On land the average person is reasonably proud of having been sick—after he begins to get better. It gives him something to talk about. The pale and interesting invalid invariably commands respect ashore. In my own list of acquaintances I number several persons—mainly widowed ladies with satisfactory incomes—who never feel well unless they are ill. In the old days they would have had resort to patent medicines and the family lot at Laurel Grove Cemetery; but now they go in for rest cures and sea voyages, and the baths at Carlsbad and specialists, these same being main contributing causes to the present high cost of living, and also helping to explain what becomes of some of those large life-insurance policies you read about. Possibly you know the type I am describing—the lady who, when planning where she will spend the summer, sends for catalogues from all the leading sanatoriums. We had one such person with us.

She had been surgically remodeled so many times that she dated everything from her last operation. At least six times in her life she had been down with something that was absolutely incurable, and she was now going to Homburg to have one of the newest and most fatal German diseases in its native haunts, where it would be at its best. She herself said that she was but a mere shell; and for the first few meals she ate like one—like a large, empty shell with plenty of curves inside it.

However, when, after a subsequent period of seclusion, she emerged from her stateroom wearing the same disheveled look that Jonah must have worn when he and the whale parted company, do you think she would confess she had been seasick? Not by any means! She said she had had a raging headache. But she could not fool me. She had the stateroom next to mine and I had heard what I had heard. She was from near Boston and she had the near-Boston accent; and she was the only person I ever met who was seasick with the broad A.

Personally I abhor those evasions, which deceive no one. If I had been seasick I should not deny it here or elsewhere. For a time I thought I was seasick. I know now I was wrong—but I thought so. There was something about the sardels served at lunch—their look or their smell or something—which seemed to make them distasteful to me; and I excused myself from the company at the table and went up and out into the open air. But the deck was unpleasantly congested with great burly brutes—beefy, carnivorous, overfed creatures, gorged with victuals and smoking disgustingly strong black cigars, and grinning in an annoying and meaning sort of way every time they passed a body who preferred to lie quiet.

The rail was also moving up and down in a manner that was annoying and wearisome for the eye to watch—first tipping up and up and up until half the sky was hidden, then dipping down and down and down until the gray and heaving sea seemed ready to leap over the side and engulf us. So I decided to go below and jot down a few notes. On arriving at my quarters I changed my mind again. I decided to let the notes wait a while and turn in.

It is my usual custom when turning in to remove the left shoe as well as the right one and to put on my pajamas; but the pajamas were hanging on a hook away over on the opposite side of the stateroom, which had suddenly grown large and wide and full of great distances; and besides, I thought it was just as well to have the left shoe where I could put my hand on it when I needed it again. So I retired practically just as I was and endeavored, as per the admonitions of certain friends, to lie perfectly flat. No doubt this thing of lying flat is all very well for some people—but suppose a fellow has not that kind of a figure?

Nevertheless, I tried. I lay as flat as I could, but the indisposition persisted; in fact, it increased materially. The manner in which my pajamas, limp and pendent from that hook, swayed and swung back and forth became extremely distasteful to me; and if by mental treatment I could have removed them from there I should assuredly have done so. But that was impossible.

Along toward evening I began to think of food. I thought of it not from its gastronomic aspect, but rather in the capacity of ballast. I did not so much desire the taste of it as the feel of it. So I summoned Lubly—he, at least, did not smile at me in that patronizing, significant way—and ordered a dinner that included nearly everything on the dinner card except Lubly's thumb. The dinner was brought to me in relays and I ate it—ate it all! This step I know now was ill-advised. It is true that for a short time I felt as I imagine a python in a zoo feels when he is full of guinea-pigs—sort of gorged, you know, and sluggish, and only tolerably uncomfortable.

Then ensued the frightful denouement. It ensued almost without warning. At the time I felt absolutely positive that I was seasick. I would have sworn to it. If somebody had put a Bible on my chest and held it there I would cheerfully have laid my right hand on it and taken a solemn oath that I was seasick. Indeed, I believed I was so seasick that I feared—hoped, rather—I might never recover from it. All I desired at the moment was to get it over with as quickly and as neatly as possible.

As in the case of drowning persons, there passed in review before my eyes several of the more recent events of my past life—meals mostly. I shall, however, pass hastily over these distressing details, merely stating in parentheses, so to speak, that I did not remember those string-beans at all. I was positive then, and am yet, that I had not eaten string-beans for nearly a week. But enough of this!

I was sure I was seasick; and I am convinced any inexperienced bystander, had there been one there, would have been misled by my demeanor into regarding me as a seasick person—but it was a wrong diagnosis. The steward told me so himself when he called the next morning. He came and found me stretched prone on the bed of affliction; and he asked me how I felt, to which I replied with a low and hollow groan—tolerably low and exceedingly hollow. It could not have been any hollower if I had been a megaphone.

So he looked me over and told me that I had climate fever. We were passing through the Gulf Stream, where the water was warmer than elsewhere in the Atlantic Ocean, and I had a touch of climate fever. It was a very common complaint in that latitude; many persons suffered from it. The symptoms were akin to seasickness, it was true; yet the two maladies were in no way to be confused. As soon as we passed out of the Gulf Stream he felt sure I would be perfectly well. Meantime he would recommend that I get Lubly to take the rest of my things off and then remain perfectly quiet. He was right about it too.

Regardless of what one may think oneself, one is bound to accept the statement of an authority on this subject; and if a steward on a big liner, who has traveled back and forth across the ocean for years, is not an authority on climate fever, who is? I looked at it in that light. And sure enough, when we had passed out of the Gulf Stream and the sea had smoothed itself out, I made a speedy and satisfactory recovery; but if it had been seasickness I should have confessed it in a minute. I have no patience with those who quibble and equivocate in regard to their having been seasick.

I had one relapse—a short one, but painful. In an incautious moment, when I wist not wot I wotted, I accepted an invitation from the chief engineer to go below. We went below—miles and miles, I think—to where, standing on metal runways that were hot to the foot, overalled Scots

ministered to the heart and the lungs and the bowels of that ship. Electricity spat cracklingly in our faces, and at our sides steel shafts as big as the pillars of a temple spun in coatings of spumy grease; and through the double skin of her we could hear, over our heads, a mighty Niagaralike churning as the slew-footed screws kicked us forward twenty-odd knots an hour. Someone raised the cover of a vat, and peering down into the opening we saw a small, vicious engine hard at work, entirely enveloped in twisty, coily, stewy depths of black oil, like a devil-fish writhing in sea-ooze and cuttle-juice.

So then we descended another mile or two to an inferno, full of naked, sooty devils forever feeding sulphurous pitfires in the nethermost parlors of the damned; but they said this was the stokehole; and I was in no condition to argue with them, for I had suddenly begun to realize that I was far from being a well person. As one peering through a glass darkly, I saw one of the attendant demons sluice his blistered bare breast with cold water, so that the sweat and grime ran from him in streams like ink; and peering in at a furnace door I saw a great angry sore of coals all scabbed and crusted over. Then another demon, wielding a nine-foot bar daintily as a surgeon wields a scalpel, reached in and stabbed it in the center, so that the fire burst through and gushed up red and rich, like blood from a wound newly lanced.

I had seen enough and to spare; but my guide brought me back by way of the steerage, in order that I might know how the other half lives. There was nothing here, either of smell or sight, to upset the human stomach—third class is better fed and better quartered now on those big ships than first class was in those good old early days—but I had held in as long as I could and now I relapsed. I relapsed in a vigorous manner—a whole-souled, boisterous manner. People halfway up the deck heard me relapsing, and I will warrant some of them were fooled too—they thought I was seasick.

It was due to my attack of climate fever that I missed the most exciting thing which happened on the voyage. I refer to the incident of the professional gamblers and the youth from Jersey City. From the very first there was one passenger who had been picked out by all the knowing passengers as a professional gambler; for he was the very spit-and-image of a professional gambler as we have learned to know him in story books. Did he not dress in plain black, without any jewelry? He certainly did. Did he not have those long, slender, flexible fingers? Such was, indeed, the correct description of those fingers. Was not his eye a keen steely-blue eye that seemed to have the power of looking right through you? Steely-blue was the right word, all right. Well, then, what more could you ask?

Behind his back sinister yet fascinating rumors circulated. He was the brilliant but unscrupulous scion of a haughty house in England. He had taken a first degree at Oxford, over there, and the third one at police headquarters, over here. Women simply could not resist him. Let him make up his mind to win a woman and she was a gone gosling. His picture was to be found in rogues' galleries and ladies' lockets. And sh-h-h! Listen! Everybody knew he was the identical crook who, disguised in woman's clothes, escaped in the last lifeboat that left the sinking Titanic. Who said so? Why—er—everybody said so!

It came as a grievous disappointment to all when we found out the truth, which was that he was the booking agent for a lyceum bureau, going abroad to sign up some foreign talent for next season's Chautauquas; and the only gambling he had ever done was on the chance of whether the Tyrolian Yodelers would draw better than our esteemed secretary of state—or vice versa.

Meantime the real professionals had established themselves cozily and comfortably aboard, had rigged the trap and cheese-baited it, and were waiting for the coming of one of the class that is born so numerous in this country. If you should be traveling this year on one of the large trans-Atlantic ships, and there should come aboard two young well-dressed men and shortly afterward a middle-aged well-dressed man with a flat nose, who was apparently a stranger to the first two; and if on the second night out in the smoking room, while the pool on the next day's run was being auctioned, one of the younger men, whom we will call Mr. Y, should appear to be slightly under the influence of malt, vinous or spirituous liquors—or all three of them at once—and should, without seeming provocation, insist on picking a quarrel with the middle-aged stranger, whom we will call Mr. Z; and if further

along in the voyage Mr. Z should introduce himself to you and suggest a little game of auction bridge for small stakes in order to while away the tedium of travel; and if it should so fall out that Mr. Y and his friend Mr. X chanced to be the only available candidates for a foursome at this fascinating pursuit; and if Mr. Z, being still hostile toward the sobered and repentant Mr. Y, should decline to take on either Mr. Y or his friend X as a partner, but chose you instead; and if on the second or third deal you picked up your cards and found you had an apparently unbeatable hand and should bid accordingly; and Mr. X should double you; and Mr. Z, sitting across from you should come gallantly right back and redouble it; and Mr. Y, catching the spirit of the moment, should double again—and so on and so forth until each point, instead of being worth only a paltry cent or two, had accumulated a value of a good many cents—if all these things or most of them should befall in the order enumerated—why, then, if I were you, gentle reader, I would have a care. And I should leave that game and go somewhere else to have it too—lest a worse thing befall you as it befell the guileless young Jerseyman on our ship. After he had paid out a considerable sum on being beaten—by just one card—upon the playing of his seemingly unbeatable hand and after the haunting and elusive odor of eau de rodent had become plainly perceptible all over the ship, he began, as the saying goes, to smell a rat himself, and straightway declined to make good his remaining losses, amounting to quite a tidy amount. Following this there were high words, meaning by that low ones, and accusations and recriminations, and at eventide when the sunset was a welter of purple and gold, there was a sudden smashing of glassware in the smoking room and a flurry of arms and legs in a far corner, and a couple of pained stewards scurrying about saying, "Ow, now, don't do that, sir, if you please, sir, thank you, sir!" And one of the belligerents came forth from the melee wearing a lavender eye with saffron trimmings, as though to match the sunset, and the other with a set of skinned knuckles, emblematic of the skinning operations previously undertaken. And through all the ship ran the hissing tongues of scandal and gossip.

Out of wild rumor and cross-rumor, certain salient facts were eventually precipitated like sediment from a clouded solution. It seemed that the engaging Messrs. X, Y and Z had been induced, practically under false pretenses to book passage, they having read in the public prints that the prodigal and card-foolish son of a cheese-paring millionaire father meant to take the ship too; but he had grievously disappointed them by not coming aboard at all. Then, when in an effort to make their traveling expenses back, they uncorked their newest trick and device for inspiring confidence in gudgeons, the particular gudgeon of their choosing had refused to pay up. Naturally they were fretful and peevish in the extreme. It spoiled the whole trip for them.

Except for this one small affair it was, on the whole, a pleasant voyage. We had only one storm and one ship's concert, and at the finish most of us were strong enough to have stood another storm. And the trip had been worth a lot to us—at least it had been worth a lot to me, for I had crossed the ocean on one of the biggest hotels afloat. I had amassed quite a lot of nautical terms that would come in very handy for stunning the folks at home when I got back. I had had my first thrill at the sight of foreign shores. And just by casual contact with members of the British aristocracy, I had acquired such a heavy load of true British hauteur that in parting on the landing dock I merely bowed distantly toward those of my fellow Americans to whom I had not been introduced; and they, having contracted the same disease, bowed back in the same haughty and distant manner.

When some of us met again, however, in Vienna, the insulation had been entirely rubbed off and we rushed madly into one another's arms and exchanged names and addresses; and, babbling feverishly the while, we told one another what our favorite flower was, and our birthstone and our grandmother's maiden name, and what we thought of a race of people who regarded a cup of ostensible coffee and a dab of honey as constituting a man's-size breakfast. And, being pretty tolerably homesick by that time, we leaned in toward a common center and gave three loud, vehement cheers for the land of the country sausage and the home of the buckwheat cake—and, as giants refreshed, went on our ways rejoicing.

That, though, was to come later. At present we are concerned with the trip over and what we had severally learned from it. I personally had learned, among other things, that the Atlantic Ocean, considered as such, is a considerably overrated body. Having been across it, even on so big and fine and well-ordered a ship as this ship was, the ocean, it seemed to me, was not at all what it had been cracked up to be.

During the first day out it is a novelty and after that a monotony—except when it is rough; and then it is a doggoned nuisance. Poets without end have written of the sea, but I take it they stayed at home to do their writing. They were not on the bounding billow when they praised it; if they had been they might have decorated the billow, but they would never have praised it.

As the old song so happily put it: My Bonny Lies Over the Ocean! And a lot of others have lied over it too; but I will not—at least not just yet. Perhaps later on I may feel moved to do so; but at this moment I am but newly landed from it and my heart is full of rankling resentment toward the ocean and all its works.

I speak but a sober conviction when I say that the chief advantage to be derived from taking an ocean voyage is not that you took it, but that you have it to talk about afterward. And, to my mind, the most inspiring sight to be witnessed on a trip across the Atlantic is the Battery—viewed from the ocean side, coming back.

Do I hear any seconds to that motion?



## Chapter III. Bathing Oneself on the Other Side

My first experience with the bathing habits of the native Aryan stocks of Europe came to pass on the morning after the night of our arrival in London.

London disappointed me in one regard—when I opened my eyes that morning there was no fog. There was not the slightest sign of a fog. I had expected that my room would be full of fog of about the consistency of Scotch stage dialect—soupy, you know, and thick and bewildering. I had expected that servants with lighted tapers in their hands would be groping their way through corridors like caves, and that from the street without, would come the hoarse-voiced cries of cabmen lost in the enshrouding gray. You remember Dickens always had them hoarse-voiced.

This was what I confidently expected. Such, however, was not to be. I woke to a consciousness that the place was flooded with indubitable and undoubted sunshine. To be sure, it was not the sharp, hard sunshine we have in America, which scours and bleaches all it touches, until the whole world has the look of having just been clear-starched and hot-ironed. It was a softened, smoke-edged, pastel-shaded sunshine; nevertheless it was plainly recognizable as the genuine article.

Nor was your London shadow the sharply outlined companion in black who accompanies you when the weather is fine in America. Your shadow in London was rather a dim and wavery gentleman who caught up with you as you turned out of the shaded by-street; who went with you a distance and then shyly vanished, but was good company while he stayed, being restful, as your well-bred Englishman nearly always is, and not overly aggressive.

There was no fog that first morning, or the next morning, or any morning of the twenty-odd we spent in England. Often the weather was cloudy, and occasionally it was rainy; and then London would be drenched in that wonderful gray color which makes it, scenically speaking, one of the most fascinating spots on earth; but it was never downright foggy and never downright cold. English friends used to speak to me about it. They apologized for good weather at that season of the year, just as natives of a Florida winter resort will apologize for bad.

"You know, old dear," they would say, "this is most unusual—most stroidinary, in fact. It ought to be raw and nasty and foggy at this time of the year, and here the cursed weather is perfectly fine—blast it!" You could tell they were grieved about it, and disappointed too. Anything that is not regular upsets Englishmen frightfully. Maybe that is why they enforce their laws so rigidly and obey them so beautifully.

Anyway I woke to find the fog absent, and I rose and prepared to take my customary cold bath. I am much given to taking a cold bath in the morning and speaking of it afterward. People who take a cold bath every day always like to brag about it, whether they take it or not.

The bathroom adjoined the bedroom, but did not directly connect with it, being reached by means of a small semi-private hallway. It was a fine, noble bathroom, white tiled and spotless; and one side of it was occupied by the longest, narrowest bathtub I ever saw. Apparently English bathtubs are constructed on the principle that every Englishman who bathes is nine feet long and about eighteen inches wide, whereas the approximate contrary is frequently the case. Draped over a chair was the biggest, widest, softest bathtowel ever made. Shem, Ham and Japhet could have dried themselves on that bathtowel, and there would still have been enough dry territory left for some of the animals—not the large, woolly animals like the Siberian yak, but the small, slick, porous animals such as the armadillo and the Mexican hairless dog.

So I wedged myself into the tub and had a snug-fitting but most luxurious bath; and when I got back to my room the maid had arrived with the shaving water. There was a knock at the door, and when I opened it there stood a maid with a lukewarm pint of water in a long-waisted, thin-lipped pewter pitcher. There was plenty of hot water to be had in the bathroom, with faucets and sinks all handy and convenient, and a person might shave himself there in absolute comfort; but long before

the days of pipes and taps an Englishman got his shaving water in a pewter ewer, and he still gets it so. It is one of the things guaranteed him under Magna Charta and he demands it as a right; but I, being but a benighted foreigner, left mine in the pitcher, and that evening the maid checked me up.

"You didn't use the shaving water I brought you to-day, sir!" she said. "It was still in the jug when I came in to tidy up, sir."

Her tone was grieved; so, after that, to spare her feelings, I used to pour it down the sink. But if I were doing the trip over again I would drink it for breakfast instead of the coffee the waiter brought me—the shaving water being warmish and containing, so far as I could tell, no deleterious substances. And if the bathroom were occupied at the time I would shave myself with the coffee. I judge it might work up into a thick and durable lather. It is certainly not adapted for drinking purposes.

The English, as a race, excel at making tea and at drinking it after it is made; but among them coffee is still a mysterious and murky compound full of strange by-products. By first weakening it and wearing it down with warm milk one may imbibe it; but it is not to be reckoned among the pleasures of life. It is a solemn and a painful duty.

On the second morning I was splashing in my tub, gratifying that amphibious instinct which has come down to us from the dim evolutionary time when we were paleozoic polliwogs, when I made the discovery that there were no towels in the bathroom. I glanced about keenly, seeking for help and guidance in such an emergency. Set in the wall directly above the rim of the tub was a brass plate containing two pushbuttons. One button, the uppermost one, was labeled Waiter—the other was labeled Maid.

This was disconcerting. Even in so short a stay under the roof of an English hotel I had learned that at this hour the waiter would be hastening from room to room, ministering to Englishmen engaged in gumming their vital organs into an impenetrable mass with the national dish of marmalade; and that the maid would also be busy carrying shaving water to people who did not need it. Besides, of all the classes I distinctly do not require when I am bathing, one is waiters and the other is maids. For some minutes I considered the situation, without making any headway toward a suitable solution of it; meantime I was getting chilled. So I dried myself—sketchily—with a toothbrush and the edge of the window-shade; then I dressed, and in a still somewhat moist state I went down to interview the management about it. I first visited the information desk and told the youth in charge there I wished to converse with some one in authority on the subject of towels. After gazing at me a spell in a puzzled manner he directed me to go across the lobby to the cashier's department. Here I found a gentleman of truly regal aspect. His tie was a perfect dream of a tie, and he wore a frock coat so slim and long and black it made him look as though he were climbing out of a smokestack. Presenting the case as though it were a supposititious one purely, I said to him:

"Presuming now that one of your guests is in a bathtub and finds he has forgotten to lay in any towels beforehand—such a thing might possibly occur, you know—how does he go about summoning the man-servant or the valet with a view to getting some?"

"Oh, sir," he replied, "that's very simple. You noticed two pushbuttons in your bathroom, didn't you?"

"I did," I said, "and that's just the difficulty. One of them is for the maid and the other is for the waiter."

"Quite so, sir," he said, "quite so. Very well, then, sir: You ring for the waiter or the maid—or, if you should chance to be in a hurry, for both of them; because, you see, one of them might chance to be en—"

"One moment," I said. "Let me make my position clear in this matter: This Lady Susanna—I do not know her last name, but you will doubtless recall the person I mean, because I saw several pictures of her yesterday in your national art gallery—this Lady Susanna may have enjoyed taking a bath with a lot of snoopy old elders lurking round in the background; but I am not so constituted. I was raised differently from that. With me, bathing has ever been a solitary pleasure. This may denote

selfishness on my part; but such is my nature and I cannot alter it. All my folks feel about it as I do. We are a very peculiar family that way. When bathing we do not invite an audience. Nor do I want one. A crowd would only embarrass me. I merely desire a little privacy and, here and there, a towel."

"Ah, yes! Quite so, sir," he said; "but you do not understand me. As I said before, you ring for the waiter or the maid. When one of them comes you tell them to send you the manservant on your floor; and when he comes you tell him you require towels, and he goes to the linen cupboard and gets them and fetches them to you, sir. It's very simple, sir."

"But why," I persisted, "why do this thing by a relay system? I don't want any famishing gentleman in this place to go practically unmarmaladed at breakfast because I am using the waiter to conduct preliminary negotiations with a third party in regard to a bathtowel."

"But it is so very simple, sir," he repeated patiently. "You ring for the waiter or the ma—"

I checked him with a gesture. I felt that I knew what he meant to say; I also felt that if any word of mine might serve to put this establishment on an easy-running basis they could have it and welcome.

"Listen!" I said. "You will kindly pardon the ignorance of a poor, red, partly damp American who has shed his eagle feathers but still has his native curiosity with him! Why not put a third button in that bathroom labeled Manservant or Valet or Towel Boy, or something of that general nature? And then when a sufferer wanted towels, and wanted 'em quick, he could get them without blocking the wheels of progress and industry. We may still be shooting Mohawk Indians and the American bison in the streets of Buffalo, New York; and we may still be saying: 'By Geehosaphat, I swan to calculate!— anyway, I note that we still say that in all your leading comic papers; but when a man in my land goes a-toweling, he goes a-toweling—and that is all there is to it, positively! In our secret lodges it may happen that the worshipful master calls the august swordbearer to him and bids him communicate with the grand outer guardian and see whether the candidate is suitably attired for admission; but in ordinary life we cut out the middleman wherever possible. Do you get my drift?"

"Oh, yes, sir," he said; "but I fear you do not understand me. As I told you, it's very simple— so very simple, sir. We've never found it necessary to make a change. You ring for the waiter or for the maid, and you tell them to tell the manservant—"

"All right," I said, breaking in. I could see that his arguments were of the circular variety that always came back to the starting point. "But, as a favor to me, would you kindly ask the proprietor to request the head cook to communicate with the carriage starter and have him inform the waiter that when in future I ring the bathroom bell in a given manner—to wit: one long, determined ring followed by three short, passionate rings—it may be regarded as a signal for towels?"

So saying, I turned on my heel and went away, for I could tell he was getting ready to begin all over again. Later on I found out for myself that, in this particular hotel, when you ring for the waiter or the maid the bell sounds in the service room, where those functionaries are supposed to be stationed; but when you ring for the manservant a small arm-shaped device like a semaphore drops down over your outer door. But what has the manservant done that he should be thus discriminated against? Why should he not have a bell of his own? So far as I might judge, the poor fellow has few enough pleasures in life as it is. Why should he battle with the intricacies of a block-signal system when everybody else round the place has a separate bell? And why all this mystery and mummery over so simple and elemental a thing as a towel?

To my mind, it merely helps to prove that among the English the art of bathing is still in its infancy. The English claim to have discovered the human bath and they resent mildly the assumption that any other nation should become addicted to it; whereas I argue that the burden of the proof shows we do more bathing to the square inch of surface than the English ever did. At least, we have superior accommodations for it.

The day is gone in this country when Saturday night was the big night for indoor aquatic sports and pastimes; and no gentleman as was a gentleman would call on his ladylove and break up her

plans for the great weekly ceremony. There may have been a time in certain rural districts when the bathing season for males practically ended on September fifteenth, owing to the water in the horsepond becoming chilled; but that time has passed. Along with every modern house that is built to-day, in country or town, we expect bathrooms and plenty of them. With us the presence of a few bathtubs more or less creates no great amount of excitement—nor does the mere sight of open plumbing particularly stir our people; whereas in England a hotelkeeper who has bathrooms on the premises advertises the fact on his stationery.

If in addition to a few bathrooms a Continental hotelkeeper has a decrepit elevator he makes more noise over it than we do over a Pompeian palmroom or an Etruscan roofgarden; he hangs a sign above his front door testifying to his magnificent enterprise in this regard. The Continental may be a born hotelkeeper, as has been frequently claimed for him; but the trouble is he usually has no hotel to keep. It is as though you set an interior decorator to run a livery stable and expected him to make it attractive. He may have the talents, but he is lacking in the raw material.

It was in a London apartment house, out Maida Vale way, that I first beheld the official bathtub of an English family establishment. It was one of those bathtubs that flourished in our own land at about the time of the Green-back craze—a coffin-shaped, boxed-in affair lined with zinc; and the zinc was suffering from tetter or other serious skin trouble and was peeling badly. There was a current superstition about the place to the effect that the bathroom and the water supply might on occasion be heated with a device known in the vernacular as a geezer.

The geezer was a sheet-iron contraption in the shape of a pocket inkstand, and it stood on a perch in the corner, like a Russian icon, with a small blue flame flickering beneath it. It looked as though its sire might have been a snare-drum and its dam a dark lantern, and that it got its looks from its father and its heating powers from the mother's side of the family. And the plumbing fixtures were of the type that passed out of general use on the American side of the water with the Rutherford B. Hayes administration. I was given to understand that this was a fair sample of the average residential London bathroom—though the newer apartment houses that are going up have better ones, they told me.

In English country houses the dearth of bathing appliances must be even more dearthful. I ran through the columns of the leading English fashion journal and read the descriptions of the large country places that were there offered for sale or lease. In many instances the advertisements were accompanied by photographic reproductions in half tone showing magnificent old places, with Queen Anne fronts and Tudor towers and Elizabethan entails and Georgian mortgages, and what not.

Seeing these views I could conjure up visions of rooks cawing in the elms; of young curates in flat hats imbibing tea on green lawns; of housekeepers named Meadows or Fleming, in rustling black silk; of old Giles—fifty years, man and boy, on the place—wearing a smock frock and leaning on a pitchfork, with a wisp of hay caught in the tines, lamenting that the 'All 'asn't been the same, zur, since the young marster was killed ridin' to 'ounds; and then pensively wiping his eyes on a stray strand of the hay.

With no great stretch of the imagination I could picture a gouty, morose old lord with a secret sorrow and a brandy breath; I could picture a profligate heir going deeper and deeper in debt, but refusing to the bitter end to put the ax to the roots of the ancestral oaks. I could imagine these parties readily, because I had frequently read about both of them in the standard English novels; and I had seen them depicted in all the orthodox English dramas I ever patronized. But I did not notice in the appended descriptions any extended notice of heating arrangements; most of the advertisements seemed to slur over that point altogether.

And, as regards bathing facilities in their relation to the capacities of these country places, I quote at random from the figures given: Eighteen rooms and one bath; sixteen rooms and two baths; fourteen rooms and one bath; twenty-one rooms and two baths; eleven rooms and one bath; thirty-

four rooms and two baths. Remember that by rooms bedrooms were meant; the reception rooms and parlors and dining halls and offices, and the like, were listed separately.

I asked a well-informed Englishman how he could reconcile this discrepancy between bedrooms and bathrooms with the current belief that the English had a practical monopoly of the habit of bathing. After considering the proposition at some length he said I should understand there was a difference in England between taking a bath and taking a tub—that, though an Englishman might not be particularly addicted to a bath, he must have his tub every morning. But I submit that the facts prove this explanation to have been but a feeble subterfuge.

Let us, for an especially conspicuous example, take the house that has thirty-four sleeping chambers and only two baths. Let us imagine the house to be full of guests, with every bedroom occupied; and, if it is possible to do so without blushing, let us further imagine a couple of pink-and-white English gentlemen in the two baths. If preferable, members of the opposite sex may imagine two ladies. Very well, then; this leaves the occupants of thirty-two bedrooms all to be provided with large tin tubs at approximately the same hour of the morning. Where would any household muster the crews to man all those portable tin tubs? And where would the proprietor keep his battery of thirty-two tubs when they were not in use? Not in the family picture gallery, surely!

From my readings of works of fiction describing the daily life of the English upper classes I know full well that the picture gallery is lined with family portraits; that each canvased countenance there shows the haughtily aquiline but slightly catarrhal nose, which is a heritage of this house; that each pair of dark and brooding eyes hide in their depths the shadow of that dread Nemesis which, through all the fateful centuries, has dogged this brave but ill-starred race until now, alas! the place must be let, furnished, to some beastly creature in trade, such as an American millionaire.

Here at this end we have the founder of the line, dubbed a knight on the gory field of Hastings; and there at that end we have the present heir, a knighted dub. We know they cannot put the tubs in the family picture gallery; there is no room. They need an armory for that outfit, and no armory is specified in the advertisement.

So I, for one, must decline to be misled or deceived by specious generalities. If you are asking me my opinion I shall simply say that the bathing habit of Merrie England is a venerable myth, and likewise so is the fresh-air fetish. The error an Englishman makes is that he mistakes cold air for fresh air.

In cold weather an Englishman arranges a few splintered jackstraws, kindling fashion, in an open grate somewhat resembling in size and shape a wallpocket for bedroom slippers. On this substructure he gently deposits one or more carboniferous nodules the size of a pigeon egg, and touches a match to the whole. In the more fortunate instances the result is a small, reddish ember smoking intermittently. He stands by and feeds the glow with a dessert-spoonful of fuel administered at half-hour intervals, and imagines he really has a fire and that he is really being warmed.

Why the English insist on speaking of coal in the plural when they use it only in the singular is more than I can understand. Conceded that we overheat our houses and our railroad trains and our hotel lobbies in America, nevertheless we do heat them. In winter their interiors are warmer and less damp than the outer air—which is more than can be said for the lands across the sea, where you have to go outdoors to thaw.

If there are any outdoor sleeping porches in England I missed them when I was there; but as regards the ventilation of an English hotel I may speak with authority, having patronized one. To begin with, the windows have heavy shades. Back of these in turn are folding blinds; then long, close curtains of muslin; then, finally, thick, manifold, shrouding draperies of some airproof woolen stuff. At nighttime the maid enters your room, seals the windows, pulls down the shades, locks the shutters, closes the curtains, draws the draperies—and then, I think, calks all the cracks with oakum. When the occupant of that chamber retires to rest he is as hermetic as old Rameses the First, safe in his tomb, ever dared to hope to be. That reddish aspect of the face noted in connection with the

average Englishman is not due to fresh air, as has been popularly supposed; it is due to the lack of it. It is caused by congestion. For years he has been going along, trying to breathe without having the necessary ingredients at hand.

At that, England excels the rest of Europe in fresh air, just as it excels it in the matter of bathing facilities. There is some fresh air left in England—an abundant supply in warm weather, and a stray bit here and there in cold. On the Continent there is none to speak of.

## Chapter IV. Jacques, the Forsaken

In Germany the last fresh air was used during the Thirty Years' War, and there has since been no demand for any. Austria has no fresh air at all—never did have any, and therefore has never felt the need of having any. Italy—the northern part of it anyhow—is also reasonably shy of this commodity.

In the German-speaking countries all street cars and all railway trains sail with battened hatches. In their palmiest days the Jimmy Hope gang could not have opened a window in a German sleeping car—not without blasting; and trying to open a window in the ordinary first or second class carriage provides healthful exercise for an American tourist, while affording a cheap and simple form of amusement for his fellow passengers. If, by superhuman efforts and at the cost of a fingernail or two, he should get one open, somebody else in the compartment as a matter of principle, immediately objects; and the retired brigadier-general, who is always in charge of a German train, comes and seals it up again, for that is the rule and the law; and then the natives are satisfied and sit in sweet content together, breathing a line of second-handed air that would choke a salamander.

Once, a good many years ago—in the century before the last I think it was—a member of the Teutonic racial stock was accidentally caught out in the fresh air and some of it got into his lungs. And, being a strange and a foreign influence to which the lungs were unused, it sickened him; in fact I am not sure but that it killed him on the spot. So the emperors of Germany and Austria got together and issued a joint ukase on the subject and, so far as the traveling public was concerned, forever abolished those dangerous experiments. Over there they think a draft is deadly, and I presume it is if you have never tampered with one. They have a saying: A little window is a dangerous thing.

As with fresh air on the Continent, so also with baths—except perhaps more so. In deference to the strange and unaccountable desires of their English-speaking guests the larger hotels in Paris are abundantly equipped with bathrooms now, but the Parisian boulevardiers continue to look with darkling suspicion on a party who will deliberately immerse his person in cold water; their beings seem to recoil in horror from the bare prospect of such a thing. It is plainly to be seen they think his intelligence has been attained by cold water externally applied; they fear that through a complete undermining of his reason he may next be committing these acts of violence on innocent bystanders rather than on himself, as in the present distressing stages of his mania. Especially, I would say, is this the attitude of the habitue of Montmartre.

I can offer no visual proof to back my word; but by other testimony I venture the assertion that when a boulevardier feels the need of a bath he hangs a musk bag round his neck—and then, as the saying is, the warmer the sweeter. His companion of the gentler sex apparently has the same idea of performing daily ablutions that a tabby cat has. You recall the tabby-cat system, do you not?—two swipes over the brow with the moistened paw, one forward swipe over each ear, a kind of circular rubbing effect across the face—and call it a day! Drowning must be the most frightful death that a Parisian sidewalk favorite can die. It is not so much the death itself—it is the attendant circumstances.

Across the river, in the older quarters of Paris, there is excitement when anybody on the block takes a bath—not so much excitement as for a fire, perhaps, but more than for a funeral. On the eve of the fatal day the news spreads through the district that to-morrow poor Jacques is going to take a bath! A further reprieve has been denied him. He cannot put it off for another month, or even for another two weeks. His doom is nigh at hand; there is no hope—none!

Kindly old Angeline, the midwife, shakes her head sadly as she goes about her simple duties.

On the morrow the condemned man rises early and sees his spiritual adviser. He eats a hearty breakfast, takes an affectionate leave of his family and says he is prepared for the worst. At the appointed hour the tumbrel enters the street, driven by the paid executioner—a descendant of the original Sanson—and bearing the dread instrument of punishment, a large oblong tin tub.



The rumble of the heavy wheels over the cobbles seems to wake an agonized chord in every bosom. To-day this dread visitation descends on Jacques; but who can tell—so the neighbors say to themselves—when the same fate may strike some other household now happily unconscious! All along the narrow way sorrow-drooped heads protrude in rows; from every casement dangle whiskers, lank and stringy with sympathy—for in this section every true Frenchman has whiskers, and if by chance he has not his wife has; so that there are whiskers for all.

From the window of the doomed wretch's apartments a derrick protrudes—a crossarm with a pulley and a rope attached. It bears a grimly significant resemblance to a gallows tree. Under the direction of the presiding functionary the tub is made fast to the tackle and hoisted upward as pianos and safes are hoisted in American cities. It halts at the open casement. It vanishes within. The whole place resounds with low murmurs of horror and commiseration.

Ah, the poor Jacques—how he must suffer! Hark to that low, sickening thud! 'Tis the accursed soap dropping from his nerveless grasp. Hist to that sound—like unto a death rattle! It is the water gurgling in the tub. And what means that low, poignant, smothered gasp? It is the last convulsive cry of Jacques descending into the depths. All is over! Let us pray!

The tub, emptied but stained, is lowered to the waiting cart. The executioner kisses the citizen who has held his horse for him during his absence and departs; the whole district still hums with ill-suppressed excitement. Questions fly from tongue to tongue. Was the victim brave at the last? Was he resigned when the dread moment came? And how is the family bearing up? It is hours before the place settles down again to that calm which will endure for another month, until somebody else takes a bath on a physician's prescription.

Even in the sanctity of a Paris hotel a bath is more or less a public function unless you lock your door. All sorts of domestic servitors drift in, filled with a morbid curiosity to see how a foreigner deports himself when engaged in this strange, barbaric rite. On the occasion of my first bath on French soil, after several of the hired help had thus called on me informally, causing me to cower low in my porcelain retreat, I took advantage of a moment of comparative quiet to rise drippingly and draw the latch. I judged the proprietor would be along next, and I was not dressed for him. The Lady Susanna of whom mention has previously been made must have stopped at a French hotel at some time of her life. This helps us to understand why she remained so calm when the elders happened in.

Even as now practiced, bathing still remains a comparative novelty in the best French circles, I imagine. I base this presumption on observations made during a visit to Versailles. I went to Versailles; I trod with reverent step those historic precincts adorned with art treasures uncountable, with curios magnificent, with relics invaluable. I visited the little palace and the big; I ventured deep into that splendid forest where, in the company of ladies regarding whom there has been a good deal of talk subsequently, France's Grandest and Merriest Monarch disported himself. And I found out what made the Merriest Monarch merry—so far as I could see, there was not a bathroom on the place. He was a true Frenchman—was Louis the Fourteenth.

In Berlin, at the Imperial Palace, our experience was somewhat similar. Led by a guide we walked through acres of state drawing rooms and state dining rooms and state reception rooms and state picture rooms; and we were told that most of them—or, at least, many of them—were the handiwork of the late Andreas Schluter. The deceased Schluter was an architect, a painter, a sculptor, a woodcarver, a decorator, all rolled into one. He was the George M. Cohan of his time; and I think he also played the clarinet, being a German.

We traversed miles of these Schluter masterpieces. Eventually we heard sounds of martial music without, and we went to a window overlooking a paved courtyard; and from that point we presently beheld a fine sight. For the moment the courtyard was empty, except that in the center stood a great mass of bronze—by Schluter, I think—a heroic equestrian statue of Saint George in the act of destroying the first adulterated German sausage. But in a minute the garrison turned out; and then in through an arched gateway filed the relief guard headed by a splendid band, with bell-hung

standards jingling at the head of the column and young officers stalking along as stiff as ramrods, and soldiers marching with the goosestep.

In the German army the private who raises his knee the highest and sticks his shank out ahead of him the straightest, and slams his foot down the hardest and jars his brain the painfulest, is promoted to be a corporal and given a much heavier pair of shoes, so that he may make more noise and in time utterly destroy his reason. The goosestep would be a great thing for destroying grasshoppers or cutworms in a plague year in a Kansas wheatfield.

At the Kaiser's palace we witnessed all these sights, but we did not run across any bathrooms or any bathtubs. However, we were in the public end of the establishment and I regard it as probable that in the other wing, where the Kaiser lives when at home, there are plenty of bathrooms. I did not investigate personally. The Kaiser was out at Potsdam and I did not care to call in his absence.

Bathrooms are plentiful at the hotel where we stopped at Berlin. I had rather hoped to find the bedroom equipped with an old-fashioned German feather bed. I had heard that one scaled the side of a German bed on a stepladder and then fell headlong into its smothering folds like a gallant fireman invading a burning rag warehouse; but this hotel happened to be the best hotel that I ever saw outside the United States. It had been built and it was managed on American lines, plus German domestic service—which made an incomparable combination—and it was furnished with modern beds and provided with modern bathrooms.

Probably as a delicate compliment to the Kaiser, the bathtowels were starched until the fringes at the ends bristled up stiffly a-curl, like the ends of His Imperial Majesty's equally imperial mustache. Just once—and once only—I made the mistake of rubbing myself with one of those towels just as it was. I should have softened it first by a hackling process, as we used to hackle the hemp in Kentucky; but I did not. For two days I felt like an etching. I looked something like one too.

In Vienna we could not get a bedroom with a bathroom attached—they did not seem to have any—but we were told there was a bathroom just across the hall which we might use with the utmost freedom. This bathroom was a large, long, loftily, marble-walled vault. It was as cold as a tomb and as gloomy as one, and very smelly. Indeed it greatly resembled the pictures I have seen of the sepulcher of an Egyptian king—only I would have said that this particular king had been skimpily embalmed by the royal undertakers in the first place, and then imperfectly packed. The bathtub was long and marked with scars, and it looked exactly like a rifled mummy case with the lid missing, which added greatly to the prevalent illusion.

We used this bathroom ad lib.: but when I went to pay the bill I found an official had been keeping tabs on us, and that all baths taken had been charged up at the rate of sixty cents apiece. I had provided my own soap too! For that matter the traveler provides his own soap everywhere in Europe, outside of England. In some parts soap is regarded as an edible and in some as a vice common to foreigners; but everywhere except in the northern countries it is a curio.

So in Vienna they made us furnish our own soap and then charged us more for a bath than they did for a meal. Still, by their standards, I dare say they were right. A meal is a necessity, but a bath is an exotic luxury; and, since they have no extensive tariff laws in Austria, it is but fair that the foreigner should pay the tax. I know I paid mine, one way or another.

Speaking of bathing reminds me of washing; and speaking of washing reminds me of an adventure I had in Vienna in connection with a white waistcoat—or, as we would call it down where I was raised, a dress vest. This vest had become soiled through travel and wear across Europe. At Vienna I intrusted it to the laundry along with certain other garments. When the bundle came back my vest was among the missing.

The maid did not seem to be able to comprehend the brand of German I use in casual conversation; so, through an interpreter, I explained to her that I was shy one white vest. For two days she brought all sorts of vests and submitted them to me on approval—thin ones and thick ones; old ones and new ones; slick ones and woolly ones; fringed ones and frayed ones. I think the woman had

a private vest mine somewhere, and went and tapped a fresh vein on my account every few minutes; but it never was the right vest she brought me.

Finally I told her in my best German, meantime accompanying myself with appropriate yet graceful gestures, that she need not concern herself further with the affair; she could just let the matter drop and I would interview the manager and put in a claim for the value of the lost garment. She looked at me dazedly a moment while I repeated the injunction more painstakingly than before; and, at that, understanding seemed to break down the barriers of her reason and she said, "Ja! Ja!" Then she nodded emphatically several times, smiled and hurried away and in twenty minutes was back, bringing with her a begging friar of some monastic order or other.

I would take it as a personal favor if some student of the various Teutonic tongues and jargons would inform me whether there is any word in Viennese for white vest that sounds like Catholic priest! However, we prayed together—that brown brother and I. I do not know what he prayed for, but I prayed for my vest.

I never got it though. I doubt whether my prayer ever reached heaven—it had such a long way to go. It is farther from Vienna to heaven than from any other place in the world, I guess—unless it is Paris. That vest is still wandering about the damp-filled corridors of that hotel, mooing in a plaintive manner for its mate—which is myself. It will never find a suitable adopted parent. It was especially coopered to my form by an expert clothing contractor, and it will not fit anyone else. No; it will wander on and on, the starchy bulge of its bosom dimly phosphorescent in the gloaming, its white pearl buttons glimmering spectrally; and after a while the hotel will get the reputation of being haunted by the ghost of a flour barrel, and will have a bad name and lose custom. I hope so anyway. It looks to be my one chance of getting even with the owner for penalizing me in the matter of baths.

From Vienna we went southward into the Tyrolese Alps. It was a wonderful ride—that ride through the Semmering and on down to Northern Italy. Our absurdly short little locomotive, drawing our absurdly long train, went boring in and out of a wrinkly shoulder-seam of the Tyrols like a stubby needle going through a tuck. I think in thirty miles we threaded thirty tunnels; after that I was practically asphyxiated and lost count.

If I ever take that journey again I shall wear a smoke helmet and be comfortable. But always between tunnels there were views to be seen that would have revived one of the Seven Sleepers. Now, on the great-granddaddy-longlegs of all the spidery trestles that ever were built, we would go roaring across a mighty gorge, its sides clothed with perpendicular gardens and vineyards, and with little gray towns clustering under the ledges on its sheer walls like mud-daubers' nests beneath an eave. Now, perched on a ridgy outcrop of rock like a single tooth in a snagged reptilian jaw, would be a deserted tower, making a fellow think of the good old feudal days when the robber barons robbed the traveler instead of as at present, when the job is so completely attended to by the pirates who weigh and register baggage in these parts.

Then—whish, roar, eclipse, darkness and sulphureted hydrogen!—we would dive into another tunnel and out again—gasping—on a breathtaking panorama of mountains. Some of them would be standing up against the sky like the jagged top of a half-finished cutout puzzle, and some would be buried so deeply in clouds that only their peaked blue noses showed sharp above the featherbed mattresses of mist in which they were snuggled, as befitted mountains of Teutonic extraction. And nearly every eminence was crowned with a ruined castle or a hotel. It was easy to tell a hotel from a ruin—it had a sign over the door.

At one of those hotels I met up with a homesick American. He was marooned there in the rain, waiting for the skies to clear, so he could do some mountain climbing; and he was beginning to get moldy from the prevalent damp. By now the study of bathing habits had become an obsession with me; I asked him whether he had encountered any bathtubs about the place. He said a bathtub in those altitudes was as rare as a chamois, and the chamois was entirely extinct; so I might make my own

calculations. But he said he could show me something that was even a greater curiosity than a bathtub, and he led me to where a moonfaced barometer hung alongside the front entrance of the hotel.

He said he had been there a week now and had about lost hope; but every time he threatened to move on, the proprietor would take him out there and prove that they were bound to have clearing weather within a few hours, because the barometer registered fair. At that moment streams of chilly rain-water were coursing down across the dial of the barometer, but it registered fair even then. He said—the American did—that it was the most stationary barometer he had ever seen, and the most reliable—not vacillating and given to moods, like most barometers, but fixed and unchangeable in its habits.

I matched it, though, with a thermometer I saw in the early spring of 1913 at a coast resort in southern California. An Eastern tourist would venture out on the windswept and drippy veranda, of a morning after breakfast. He would think he was cold. He would have many of the outward indications of being cold. His teeth would be chattering like a Morse sounder, and inside his white-duck pants his knees would be knocking together with a low, muffled sound. He would be so prickled with gooseflesh that he felt like Saint Sebastian; but he would take a look at the thermometer—sixty-one in the shade! And such was the power of mercury and mind combined over matter that he would immediately chirk up and feel warm.

Not a hundred yards away, at a drug store, was one of those fickle-minded, variable thermometers, showing a temperature that ranged from fifty-five on downward to forty; but the hotel thermometer stood firm at sixty-one, no matter what happened. In a season of trying climatic conditions it was a great comfort—a boon really—not only to its owner but to his guests. Speaking personally, however, I have no need to consult the barometer's face to see what the weather is going to do, or the thermometer's tube to see what it has done. No person needs to do so who is favored naturally as I am. I have one of the most dependable soft corns in the business.

Rome is full of baths—vast ruined ones erected by various emperors and still bearing their names—such as Caracalla's Baths and Titus' Baths, and so on. Evidently the ancient Romans were very fond of taking baths.

Other striking dissimilarities between the ancient Romans and the modern Romans are perceptible at a glance.

## **Chapter V. When the Seven A.M. Tut-tut leaves for Anywhere**

Being desirous of tendering sundry hints and observations to such of my fellow countrymen as may contemplate trips abroad I shall, with their kindly permission, devote this chapter to setting forth briefly the following principles, which apply generally to railroad travel in the Old World.

First—On the Continent all trains leave at or about seven A.M. and reach their destination at or about eleven P.M. You may be going a long distance or a short one—it makes no difference; you leave at seven and you arrive at eleven. The few exceptions to this rule are of no consequence and do not count.

Second—A trunk is the most costly luxury known to European travel. If I could sell my small, shrinking and flat-chested steamer trunk—original value in New York eighteen dollars and seventy-five cents—for what it cost me over on the other side in registration fees, excess charges, mental wear and tear, freightage, forwarding and warehousing bills, tips, bribes, indulgences, and acts of barratry and piracy, I should be able to laugh in the income tax's face. In this connection I would suggest to the tourist who is traveling with a trunk that he begin his land itinerary in Southern Italy and work northward; thereby, through the gradual shrinkage in weight, he will save much money on his trunk, owing to the pleasing custom among the Italian trainhands of prying it open and making a judicious selection from its contents for personal use and for gifts to friends and relatives.

Third—For the sake of the experience, travel second class once; after that travel first class—and try to forget the experience. With the exception of two or three special-fare, so-called de-luxe trains, first class over there is about what the service was on an accommodation, mixed-freight-and-passenger train in Arkansas immediately following the close of the Civil War.

Fourth—When buying a ticket for anywhere you will receive a cunning little booklet full of detachable leaves, the whole constituting a volume about the size and thickness of one of those portfolios of views that came into popularity with us at the time of the Philadelphia Centennial. Surrender a sheet out of your book on demand of the uniformed official who will come through the train at from five to seven minute intervals. However, he will collect only a sheet every other trip; on the alternate trips he will merely examine your ticket with the air of never having seen it before, and will fold it over, and perforate it with his punching machine and return it to you. By the time you reach your destination nothing will be left but the cover; but do not cast this carelessly aside; retain it until you are filing out of the terminal, when it will be taken up by a haughty voluptuary with whiskers. If you have not got it you cannot escape. You will have to go back and live on the train, which is, indeed, a frightful fate to contemplate.

Fifth—Reach the station half an hour before the train starts and claim your seat; then tip the guard liberally to keep other passengers out of your compartment. He has no intention of doing so, but it is customary for Americans to go through this pleasing formality—and it is expected of them.

Sixth—Tip everybody on the train who wears a uniform. Be not afraid of hurting some one's feelings by offering a tip to the wrong person. There will not be any wrong person. A tip is the one form of insult that anybody in Europe will take.

Seventh—Before entering the train inhale deeply several times. This will be your last chance of getting any fresh air until you reach your destination. For self-defense against the germ life prevailing in the atmosphere of the unventilated compartments, smoke a German cigar. A German cigar keeps off any disease except the cholera; it gives you the cholera.

Eighth—Do not linger on the platform, waiting for the locomotive whistle to blow, or the bell to ring, or somebody to yell "All aboard!" If you do this you will probably keep on lingering until the following morning at seven. As a starting signal the presiding functionary renders a brief solo on

a tiny tin trumpet. One puny warning blast from this instrument sets the whole train in motion. It makes you think of Gabriel bringing on the Day of Judgment by tootling on a penny whistle. Another interesting point: The engine does not say Choo-choo as in our country—it says Tut-tut.

Ninth—In England, for convenience in claiming your baggage, change your name to Xenophon or Zymology—there are always about the baggage such crowds of persons who have the commoner initials, such as T for Thompson, J for Jones, and S for Smith. When next I go to England my name will be Zoroaster—Quintus P. Zoroaster.

Tenth—If possible avoid patronizing the so-called refreshment wagons or dining cars, which are expensive and uniformly bad. Live off the country. Remember, the country is living off you.

## Chapter VI. La Belle France Being the First Stop

Except eighty or ninety other things the British Channel was the most disappointing thing we encountered in our travels. All my reading on this subject had led me to expect that the Channel would be very choppy and that we should all be very seasick. Nothing of the sort befell. The channel may have been suetty but it was not choppy. The steamer that ferried us over ran as steadily as a clock and everybody felt as fine as a fiddle.

A friend of mine whom I met six weeks later in Florence had better luck. He crossed on an occasion when a test was being made of a device for preventing seasickness. A Frenchman was the inventor and also the experimenter. This Frenchman had spent valuable years of his life perfecting his invention. It resembled a hammock swung between uprights. The supports were to be bolted to the deck of the ship, and when the Channel began to misbehave the squeamish passenger would climb into the hammock and fasten himself in; and then, by a system of reciprocating oscillations, the hammock would counteract the motion of the ship and the occupant would rest in perfect comfort no matter how high she pitched or how deep she rolled. At least such was the theory of the inventor; and to prove it he offered himself as the subject for the first actual demonstration.

The result was unexpected. The sea was only moderately rough; but that patent hammock bucked like a kicking bronco. The poor Frenchman was the only seasick person aboard—but he was sick enough for the whole crowd. He was seasick with a Gallic abandon; he was seasick both ways from the jack, and other ways too. He was strapped down so he could not get out, which added no little to the pleasure of the occasion for everybody except himself. When the steamer landed the captain of the boat told the distressed owner that, in his opinion, the device was not suited for steamer use. He advised him to rent it to a riding academy.

In crossing from Dover to Calais we had thought we should be going merely from one country to another; we found we had gone from one world to another. That narrow strip of uneasy water does not separate two countries—it separates two planets.

Gone were the incredible stiffness and the incurable honesty of the race that belonged over yonder on those white chalk cliffs dimly visible along the horizon. Gone were the phlegm and stolidity of those people who manifest emotion only on the occasions when they stand up to sing their national anthem:

God save the King!  
The Queen is doing well!

Gone were the green fields of Sussex, which looked as though they had been taken in every night and brushed and dry-cleaned and then put down again in the morning. Gone were the trees that Maxfield Parrish might have painted, so vivid were they in their burnished green-and-yellow coloring, so spectacular in their grouping. Gone was the five-franc note which I had intrusted to a sandwich vender on the railroad platform in the vain hope that he would come back with the change. After that clincher there was no doubt about it—we were in La Belle France all right, all right!

Everything testified to the change. From the pier where we landed, a small boy, in a long black tunic belted in at his waist, was fishing; he hooked a little fingerling. At the first tentative tug on his line he set up a shrill clamor. At that there came running a fat, kindly looking old priest in a long gown and a shovel hat; and a market woman came, who had arms like a wrestler and skirts that stuck out like a ballet dancer's; and a soldier in baggy red pants came; and thirty or forty others of all ages and sizes came—and they gathered about that small boy and gave him advice at the top of their voices. And when he yanked out the shining little silver fish there could not have been more animation and enthusiasm and excitement if he had landed a full-grown Presbyterian.



They were still congratulating him when we pulled out and went tearing along on our way to Paris, scooting through quaint, stone-walled cities, each one dominated by its crumbly old cathedral; sliding through open country where the fields were all diked and ditched with small canals and bordered with poplars trimmed so that each tree looked like a set of undertaker's whiskers pointing the wrong way.

And in these fields were peasants in sabots at work, looking as though they had just stepped out of one of Millet's pictures. Even the haystacks and the scarecrows were different. In England the haystacks had been geometrically correct in their dimensions—so square and firm and exact that sections might be sliced off them like cheese, and doors and windows might be carved in them; but these French haystacks were devil-may-care haystacks wearing tufts on their polls like headdresses. The windmills had a rakish air; and the scarecrows in the truck gardens were debonair and cocky, tilting themselves back on their pins the better to enjoy the view and fluttering their ragged vestments in a most jaunty fashion. The land though looked poor—it had a driven, overworked look to it.

Presently, above the clacking voice of our train, we heard a whining roar without; and peering forth we beheld almost over our heads a big monoplane racing with us. It seemed a mighty, winged Thunder Lizard that had come back to link the Age of Stone with the Age of Air. On second thought I am inclined to believe the Thunder Lizard did not flourish in the Stone Age; but if you like the simile as much as I like it we will just let it stand.

Three times on that trip we saw from the windows of our train aviators out enjoying the cool of the evening in their airships; and each time the natives among the passengers jammed into the passageway that flanked the compartments and speculated regarding the identity of the aviators and the make of their machines, and argued and shrugged their shoulders and quarreled and gesticulated. The whole thing was as Frenchy as tripe in a casserole.

I was wrong, though, a minute ago when I said there remained nothing to remind us of the right little, tight little island we had just quit; for we had two Englishmen in our compartment—fit and proper representatives of a certain breed of Englishman. They were tall and lean, and had the languid eyes and the long, weary faces and the yellow buck teeth of weary cart-horses, and they each wore a fixed expression of intense gloom. You felt sure it was a fixed expression because any person with such an expression would change it if he could do so by anything short of a surgical operation. And it was quite evident they had come mentally prepared to disapprove of all things and all people in a foreign clime.

Silently, but none the less forcibly, they resented the circumstance that others should be sharing the same compartment with them—or sharing the same train, either, for that matter. The compartment was full, too, which made the situation all the more intolerable: an elderly English lady with a placid face under a mid-Victorian bonnet; a young, pretty woman who was either English or American; the two members of my party, and these two Englishmen.

And when, just as the train was drawing out of Calais, they discovered that the best two seats, which they had promptly preempted, belonged to others, and that the seats for which they held reservations faced rearward, so that they must ride with their backs to the locomotive—why, that irked them sore and more. I imagine they wrote a letter to the London Times about it afterward.

As is the pleasing habit of traveling Englishmen, they had brought with them everything portable they owned. Each one had four or five large handbags, and a carryall, and a hat box, and his tea-caddy, and his plaid blanket done up in a shawlstrap, and his framed picture of the Death of Nelson—and all the rest of it; and they piled those things in the luggage racks until both the racks were chock-full; so the rest of us had to hold our baggage in our laps or sit on it. One of them was facing me not more than five or six feet distant. He never saw me though. He just gazed steadily through me, studying the pattern of the upholstery on the seat behind me; and I could tell by his look that he did not care for the upholstering—as very naturally he would not, it being French.

We had traveled together thus for some hours when one of them began to cloud up for a sneeze. He tried to sidetrack it, but it would not be sidetracked. The rest of us, looking on, seemed to hear that sneeze coming from a long way off. It reminded me of a musical-sketch team giving an imitation of a brass band marching down Main Street playing the Turkish Patrol—dim and faint at first, you know, and then growing louder and stronger, and gathering volume until it bursts right in your face.

Fascinated, we watched his struggles. Would he master it or would it master him? But he lost, and it was probably a good thing he did. If he had swallowed that sneeze it would have drowned him. His nose jibed and went about; his head tilted back farther and farther; his countenance expressed deep agony, and then the log jam at the bend in his nose went out with a roar and he let loose the moistest, loudest kerswoosh! that ever was, I reckon.

He sneezed eight times. The first sneeze unbuttoned his waistcoat, the second unparted his hair, and the third one almost pulled his shoes off; and after that they grew really violent, until the last sneeze shifted his cargo and left him with a list to port and his lee scuppers awash. It made a ruin of him—the Prophet Isaiah could not have remained dignified wrestling with a sneezing bee of those dimensions—but oh, how it did gladden the rest of us to behold him at the mercy of the elements and to note what a sodden, waterlogged wreck they made of him!

It was not long after that before we had another streak of luck. The train jolted over something and a hat fell down from the topmost pinnacle of the mountain of luggage above and hit his friend on the nose. We should have felt better satisfied if it had been a coal scuttle; but it was a reasonably hard and heavy hat and it hit him brim first on the tenderest part of his nose and made his eyes water, and we were grateful enough for small blessings. One should not expect too much of an already overworked Providence.

The rest of us were still warm and happy in our souls when, without any whistle-tooting or bell-clanging or station-calling, we slid silently, almost surreptitiously, into the Gare du Nord, at Paris. Neither in England nor on the mainland does anyone feel called on to notify you that you have reached your destination.

It is like the old formula for determining the sex of a pigeon—you give the suspected bird some corn, and if he eats it he is a he; but if she eats it she is a she. In Europe if it is your destination you get off, and if it is not your destination you stay on. On this occasion we stayed on, feeling rather forlorn and helpless, until we saw that everyone else had piled off. We gathered up our belongings and piled off too.

By that time all the available porters had been engaged; so we took up our luggage and walked. We walked the length of the trainshed—and then we stepped right into the recreation hall of the State Hospital for the Criminal Insane, at Matteawan, New York. I knew the place instantly, though the decorations had been changed since I was there last. It was a joy to come on a home institution so far from home—joysome, but a trifle disconcerting too, because all the keepers had died or gone on strike or something; and the lunatics, some of them being in uniform and some in civilian dress, were leaping from crag to crag, uttering maniacal shrieks.

Divers lunatics, who had been away and were just getting back, and sundry lunatics who were fixing to go away and apparently did not expect ever to get back, were dashing headlong into the arms of still other lunatics, kissing and hugging them, and exchanging farewells and sacre-bleuing with them in the maddest fashion imaginable. From time to time I laid violent hands on a flying, flitting maniac and detained him against his will, and asked him for some directions; but the persons to whom I spoke could not understand me, and when they answered I could not understand them; so we did not make much headway by that. I could not get out of that asylum until I had surrendered the covers of our ticket books and claimed our baggage and put it through the customs office. I knew that; the trouble was I could not find the place for attending to these details. On a chance I tried a door, but it was distinctly the wrong place; and an elderly female on duty there got me out by employing the

universal language known of all peoples. She shook her skirts at me and said Shoo! So I got out, still toting five or six bags and bundles of assorted sizes and shapes, and tried all the other doors in sight.

Finally, by a process of elimination and deduction, I arrived at the right one. To make it harder for me they had put it around a corner in an elbow-shaped wing of the building and had taken the sign off the door. This place was full of porters and loud cries. To be on the safe side I tendered retaining fees to three of the porters; and thus by the time I had satisfied the customs officials that I had no imported spirits or playing cards or tobacco or soap, or other contraband goods, and had cleared our baggage and started for the cabstand, we amounted to quite a stately procession and attracted no little attention as we passed along. But the tips I had to hand out before the taxi started would stagger the human imagination if I told you the sum total.

There are few finer things than to go into Paris for the first time on a warm, bright Saturday night. At this moment I can think of but one finer thing—and that is when, wearied of being short-changed and bilked and double-charged, and held up for tips or tribute at every step, you are leaving Paris on a Saturday night—or, in fact, any night.

Those first impressions of the life on the boulevards are going to stay in my memory a long, long time—the people, paired off at the tables of the sidewalk cafes, drinking drinks of all colors; a little shopgirl wearing her new, cheap, fetching hat in such a way as to center public attention on her head and divert it from her feet, which were shabby; two small errand boys in white aprons, standing right in the middle of the whirling, swirling traffic, in imminent peril of their lives, while one lighted his cigarette butt from the cigarette butt of his friend; a handful of roistering soldiers, singing as they swept six abreast along the wide, ruddy sidewalk; the kiosks for advertising, all thickly plastered over with posters, half of which should have been in an art gallery and the other half in a garbage barrel; a well-dressed pair, kissing in the full glare of a street light; an imitation art student, got up to look like an Apache, and—no doubt—plenty of real Apaches got up to look like human beings; a silk-hatted gentleman, stopping with perfect courtesy to help a bloused workman lift a baby-laden baby carriage over an awkward spot in the curbing, and the workman returning thanks with the same perfect courtesy; our own driver, careening along in a manner suggestive of what certain East Side friends of mine would call the Chariot Race from Ben Hirsch; and a stout lady of the middle class sitting under a cafe awning caressing her pet mole.

To the Belgian belongs the credit of domesticating the formerly ferocious Belgian hare, and the East Indian fakir makes a friend and companion of the king cobra; but it remained for those ingenious people, the Parisians, to tame the mole, which other races have always regarded as unbeautiful and unornamental, and make a cunning little companion of it and spend hours stroking its fleece. This particular mole belonging to the stout middle-aged lady in question was one of the largest moles and one of the curliest I ever saw. It was on the side of her nose.

You see a good deal of mole culture going on here. Later, with the reader's permission, we shall return to Paris and look its inhabitants over at more length; but for the time being I think it well for us to be on our travels. In passing I would merely state that on leaving a Paris hotel you will tip everybody on the premises.

Oh, yes—but you will!

Let us move southward. Let us go to Sunny Italy, which is called Sunny Italy for the same reason that the laughing hyena is called the laughing hyena—not because he laughs so frequently, but because he laughs so seldom. Let us go to Rome, the Eternal City, sitting on her Seven Hills, remembering as we go along that the currency has changed and we no longer compute sums of money in the franc but in the lira. I regret the latter word is not pronounced as spelled—it would give me a chance to say that the common coin of Italy is a lira, and that nearly everybody in Rome is one also.

## Chapter VII. Thence On and On to Verbotenland

Ah, Rome—the Roma of the Ancients—the Mistress of the Olden World—the Sacred City! Ah, Rome, if only your stones could speak! It is customary for the tourist, taking his cue from the guidebooks, to carry on like this, forgetting in his enthusiasm that, even if they did speak, they would doubtless speak Italian, which would leave him practically where he was before. And so, having said it myself according to formula, I shall proceed to state the actual facts:

If, coming forth from a huge and dirty terminal, you emerge on a splendid plaza, miserably paved, and see a priest, a soldier and a beggar; a beautiful child wearing nothing at all to speak of, and a hideous old woman with the eyes of a Madonna looking out of a tragic mask of a face; a magnificent fountain, and nobody using the water, and a great, overpowering smell—yes, you can see a Roman smell; a cart mule with ten dollars' worth of trappings on him, and a driver with ten cents' worth on him; a palace like a dream of stone, entirely surrounded by nightmare hovels; a new, shiny, modern apartment house, and shouldering up against it a cankered rubbish heap that was once the playhouse of a Caesar, its walls bearded like a pard's face with tufted laurel and splotched like a brandy drunkard's with red stains; a church that is a dismal ruin without and a glittering Aladdin's Cave of gold and gems and porphyry and onyx within; a wide and handsome avenue starting from one festering stew of slums and ending in another festering stew of slums; a grimed and broken archway opening on a lovely hidden courtyard where trees are green and flowers bloom, and in the center there stands a statue which is worth its weight in minted silver and which carries more than its weight in dirt—if in addition everybody in sight is smiling and good-natured and happy, and is trying to sell you something or wheedle you out of something, or pick your pocket of something—you need not, for confirmatory evidence, seek the vast dome of St. Peter's rising yonder in the distance, or the green tops of the cedars and the dusky clumps of olive groves on the hillsides beyond—you know you are in Rome.

To get the correct likeness of Naples we merely reduce the priests by one-half and increase the beggars by two-thirds; we richen the color masses, thicken the dirt, raise the smells to the Nth degree, and set half the populace to singing. We establish in every second doorway a mother with her offspring tucked between her knees and forcibly held there while the mother searches the child's head for a flea; anyhow, it is more charitable to say it is a flea; and we add a special touch of gorgeousness to the street pictures.

For here a cart is a glory of red tires and blue shafts, and green hubs and pink body and purple tailgate, with a canopy on it that would have suited Sheba's Queen; and the mule that draws the cart is caparisoned in brass and plumage like a circus pony; and the driver wears a broad red sash, part of a shirt, and half of a pair of pants—usually the front half. With an outfit such as that, you feel he should be peddling aurora borealis, or, at the very least, rainbows. It is a distinct shock to find he has only chianti or cheeses or garbage in stock.

In Naples, also, there is, even in the most prosaic thing, a sight to gladden your eye if you but hold your nose while you look on it. On the stalls of the truckvenders the cauliflowers and the cabbages are racked up with an artistic effect we could scarcely equal if we had roses and orchids to work with; the fishmonger's cart is a study in still life, and the tripe is what artists call a harmonious interior.

Nearly all the hotels in Italy are converted palaces. They may have been successes as palaces, but, with their marble floors and their high ceilings, and their dank, dark corridors, they distinctly fail to qualify as hotels. I should have preferred them remaining unsaved and sinful. I likewise observed a peculiarity common to hotelkeepers in Italy—they all look like cats. The proprietor of the converted palace where we stopped in Naples was the very image of a tomcat we used to own, named Plutarch's Lives, which was half Maltese and half Mormon. He was a cat that had a fine carrying voice—though better adapted for concert work than parlor singing—and a sweetheart in every port. This hotelkeeper might have been the cat's own brother with clothes on—he had Plute's roving eye and his bristling

whiskers and his sharp white teeth, and Plute's silent, stealthy tread, and his way of purring softly until he had won your confidence and then sticking his claw into you. The only difference was, he stuck you with a bill instead of a claw.

Another interesting idiosyncrasy of the Italian hotelkeeper is that he invariably swears to you his town is the only honest town in Italy, but begs you to beware of the next town which, he assures you with his hand on the place where his heart would be if he had a heart, is full of thieves and liars and counterfeit money and pickpockets. Half of what he tells you is true—the latter half.

The tourist agencies issue pamphlets telling how you may send money or jewelry by registered mail in Italy, and then append a footnote warning you against sending money or jewelry by registered mail in Italy. Likewise you are constantly being advised against carrying articles of value in your trunk, unless it is most carefully locked, bolted and strapped. It is good advice too.

An American I met on the boat coming home told me he failed to take such precautions while traveling in Italy; and he said that when he reached the Swiss border his trunk was so light he had to sit on it to keep it from blowing off the bus on the way from the station to the hotel, and so empty that when he opened it at both ends the draft whistling through it gave him a bad cold. However, he may have exaggerated slightly.

If you can forget that you are paying first-class prices for fourth-rate accommodations—forget the dirt in the carriages and the smells in the compartments—a railroad journey through the Italian Peninsula is a wonderful experience. I know it was a wonderful experience for me.

I shall not forget the old walled towns of stone perched precariously on the sloping withers of razorbacked mountains—towns that were old when the Saviour was born; or the ancient Roman aqueducts, all pocked and pecked with age, looping their arches across the land for miles on miles; or the fields, scored and scarified by three thousand years of unremitting, relentless, everlasting agriculture; or the wide-horned Italian cattle that browsed in those fields; or yet the woman who darted to the door of every signal-house we passed and came to attention, with a long cudgel held flat against her shoulder like a sentry's musket.

I do not know why a woman should exhibit an overgrown broomstick when an Italian train passes a flag station, any more than I know why, when a squad of Paris firemen march out of the engine house for exercise, they should carry carbines and knapsacks. I only know that these things are done.

In Tuscany the vineyards make a fine show, for the vines are trained to grow up from the ground and then are bound into streamers and draped from one fruit tree or one shade tree to another, until a whole hillside becomes one long, confusing vista of leafy festoons. The thrifty owner gets the benefit of his grapes and of his trees, and of the earth below, too, for there he raises vegetables and grains, and the like. Like everything else in this land, the system is an old one. I judge it was old enough to be hackneyed when Horace wrote of it:

Now each man, basking on his slopes,  
Weds to his widowed tree the vine;  
Then, as he gayly quaffs his wine,  
Salutes thee god of all his hopes.

Classical quotations interspersed here and there are wonderful helps to a guide book, don't you think?

In rural Italy there are two other scenic details that strike the American as being most curious—one is the amazing prevalence of family washing, and the other is the amazing scarcity of birdlife. To himself the traveler says:

"What becomes of all this intimate and personal display of family apparel I see fluttering from the front windows of every house in this country? Everybody is forever washing clothes but nobody ever wears it after it is washed. And what has become of all the birds?"

For the first puzzle there is no key, but the traveler gets the answer to the other when he passes a meat-dealer's shop in the town and sees spread on the stalls heaps of pitifully small starlings and sparrows and finches exposed for sale. An Italian will cook and eat anything he can kill that has wings on it, from a cassowary to a katydid.

Thinking this barbarity over, I started to get indignant; but just in time I remembered what we ourselves have done to decimate the canvas-back duck and the wild pigeon and the ricebird and the red-worsted pulse-warmer, and other pleasing wild creatures of the earlier days in America, now practically or wholly extinct. And I felt that before I could attend to the tomtits in my Italian brother's eye I must needs pluck a few buffaloes out of my own; so I decided, in view of those things, to collect myself and endeavor to remain perfectly calm.

We came into Venice at the customary hour—to wit, eleven P.M.—and had a real treat as our train left the mainland and went gliding far out, seemingly right through the placid Adriatic, to where the beaded lights of Venice showed like a necklace about the withered throat of a long-abandoned bride, waiting in the rags of her moldered wedding finery for a bridegroom who comes not.

Better even than this was the journey by gondola from the terminal through narrow canals and under stone bridges where the water lapped with little mouthing tongues at the walls, and the tall, gloomy buildings almost met overhead, so that only a tiny strip of star-buttoned sky showed between. And from dark windows high up came the tinkle of guitars and the sound of song pouring from throats of silver. And so we came to our hotel, which was another converted palace; but baptism is not regarded as essential to salvation in these parts.

On the whole, Venice did not impress me as it has impressed certain other travelers. You see, I was born and raised in one of those Ohio Valley towns where the river gets emotional and temperamental every year or two. In my youth I had passed through several of these visitations, when the family would take the family plate and the family cow, and other treasures, and retire to the attic floor to wait for the spring rise to abate; and when really the most annoying phase of the situation for a housekeeper, sitting on the top landing of his staircase watching the yellow wavelets lap inch by inch over the keys of the piano, and inch by inch climb up the new dining-room wallpaper, was to hear a knocking at a front window upstairs and go to answer it and find that Moscoe Burnett had come in a john-boat to collect the water tax.

The Grand Canal did not stir me as it has stirred some—so far back as '84 I could remember when Jefferson Street at home looked almost exactly like that.

Going through the Austrian Tyrol, between Vienna and Venice, I met two old and dear friends in their native haunts—the plush hat and the hot dog. When such a thing as this happens away over on the other side of the globe it helps us to realize how small a place this world is after all, and how closely all peoples are knitted together in common bonds of love and affection. The hot dog, as found here, is just as we know him throughout the length and breadth of our own land—a dropsical Wienerwurst entombed in the depths of a rye-bread sandwich, with a dab of horse-radish above him to mark his grave; price, creation over, five cents the copy.

The woolly plush hat shows no change either, except that if anything it is slightly woollier in the Alps than among us. As transplanted, the dinky little bow at the back is an affectation purely—but in these parts it is logical and serves a practical and a utilitarian purpose, because the mountain byways twist and turn and double, and the local beverages are potent brews; and the weary mountaineer, homeward-bound afoot at the close of a market day, may by the simple expedient of reaching up and fingering his bow tell instantly whether he is going or coming.

This is also a great country for churches. Every group of chalets that calls itself a village has at least one long-spined gray church in its midst, and frequently more than one. In one sweep of hillside

view from our car window I counted seven church steeples. I do not think it was a particularly good day for churches either; I wished I might have passed through on a Sunday, when they would naturally be thicker.

Along this stretch of railroad the mountaineers come to the stations wearing the distinctive costume of their own craggy and slabsided hills—the curling pheasant feather in the hatbrim; the tight-fitting knee-breeches; the gaudy stockings; and the broad-suspended belt with rows of huge brass buttons spangling it up and down and crosswise. Such is your pleasure at finding these quaint habiliments still in use amid settings so picturesque that you buy freely of the fancy-dressed individual's wares—for he always has something to sell.

And then as your train pulls out, if by main force and awkwardness you jam a window open, as I did, and cast your eyes rearward for a farewell peek, as I did, you will behold him, as I did, pulling off his parade clothes and climbing into the blue overalls and the jean jumpers of prosaic civilization, to wait until the next carload lot of foreign tourists rolls in. The European peasant is indeed a simple, guileless creature—if you are careless about how you talk.

In this district and on beyond, the sight of women doing the bulk of the hard and dirty farmwork becomes common. You see women plowing; women hoeing; women carrying incredibly huge bundles of fagots and fodder on their heads; women hauling heavy carts, sometimes with a straining, panting dog for a teammate, sometimes unaccompanied except by a stalwart father or husband, or brother or son, who, puffing a china-bowled pipe, walks alongside to see that the poor human draft-animals do not shirk or balk, or shy over the traces.

To one coming from a land where no decent man raises his hand against a woman—except, of course, in self-defense—this is indeed a startling sight to see; but worse is in store for him when he reaches Bohemia, on the upper edge of the Austrian Empire. In Bohemia, if there is a particularly nasty and laborious job to be done, such as spading up manure in the rain or grubbing sugar-beets out of the half-frozen earth, they wish it on the dear old grandmother. She always seemed to me to be a grandmother—or old enough for one anyway. Perhaps, though, it is the life they lead, and not the years, that bends the backs of these women and thickens their waists and mats their hair and turns their feet into clods and their hands into swollen, red monstrosities.

Surely the Walrus, in *Alice in Wonderland*, had Germany in mind when he said the time had come to speak of cabbages and kings—because Germany certainly does lead the known world in those two commodities. Everywhere in Germany you see them—the cabbages by the millions and the billions, growing rank and purple in the fields and giving promise of the time when they will change from vegetable to vine and become the fragrant and luscious trailing sauerkraut; but the kings, in stone or bronze, stand up in the marketplace or the public square, or on the bridge abutment, or just back of the brewery, in every German city and town along the route.



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