

Chapter 12 Crossing the Pacific Ocean

The boat carrying them from Yokohama to San Francisco was the *General Grant*, which belonged to the American Steamship Company. It was a large steamer, well built and able to travel at great speed. At the rate of twelve miles an hour it would take only twenty-one days to cross the Pacific Ocean. Phileas Fogg had every reason to believe that he would be in San Francisco on 2nd December, in New York on the 11th, and that he would reach London on the 20th, a few hours earlier than the 21st.

There were a good number of people on the boat: English, Americans, and others.

During the crossing nothing in particular happened. The sea was calm. Mr Fogg was calm, too, and said little, as usual. Aouda came to have more and more respect for this man who had done so much for her. In fact, almost unconsciously, her feelings of respect were changing to feelings of a different sort.

Whatever her feelings may have been, she was very interested in this gentleman's plan, and most anxious that nothing might happen to spoil it. She often had talks with Passepartout, who soon saw the state of her feelings towards Mr Fogg. He praised his master's honesty and kindness. Then he calmed her anxieties

about the journey, saying that the most difficult part was already over. They had left those strange countries of China and Japan; and if they crossed America by train and the Atlantic Ocean by steamer, it would be easy to complete the journey round the world in good time.

Nine days after leaving Yokohama, Phileas Fogg had gone round exactly one half of the world. It is true that out of the eighty days he had used up fifty-two. But we must remember that if Mr Fogg had done half the journey as measured by the sun, he had really done more than two-thirds in distance as measured by the number of miles travelled. From London to Aden, Aden to Bombay, Calcutta to Singapore, Singapore to Yokohama – that was a very indirect journey. If we could go round the world as the sun does, the distance from London to London would be 12,000 miles. But by this indirect journey the distance is 26,000 miles, of which Mr Fogg had travelled 17,500. From now on the journey would be almost in a straight line. And Fix was no longer there to stop him.

It happened, too, that on this day, 23th November, Passepartout made a discovery that brought him great joy. It will be remembered that his watch kept London time, and that he refused to put its hands forward. All the clocks in all the countries he had passed through, he said, were wrong. Now on this day, although he had put its hands neither forward nor backward, the watch showed the same time as the clock on the ship. He wished that Fix were there so that he could prove to him that his watch kept the right time after all.

“The silly fool was talking to me about the sun and the moon and the movement of the earth. If we listened to people like him, we would have a very funny sort of time. I was certain that one day the sun would come to agree with my watch!”

But there was something that Passepartout did not know. If his watch had been marked from one to twenty-four hours (as some

clocks are) he would not have been so happy about it. For in that case, instead of pointing to nine o'clock (as it did), it would have been pointing to twenty-one hours.

But if Fix had been able to explain this, Passepartout would not have been able to understand the explanation, or to accept it. In any case, if the detective had appeared at that moment, it is probable that Passepartout would have had something to say to him on quite a different subject.

But where *was* Fix at that moment?

He was, in fact, on the *General Grant*.

When he reached Yokohama, he left Mr Fogg, whom he expected to meet again later in the day, and went immediately to the British consul. There he found the warrant. It had been following him all the way from Bombay, and was already forty days old. It had been sent on from Hong Kong by the *Carnatic*, the steamer on which he was believed to be. We may imagine the disappointment of Fix – the warrant had now become useless because Mr Fogg was outside the reach of the English law.

'Very well!' Fix said to himself, swallowing his anger. 'The warrant is of no use here, but it will be of use in England. It looks as if this bank robber intends to return home after all. Very well, I will follow him there. As for the money he stole, I hope there will still be some left. But with the cost of the journey, the presents he gives, the elephant he bought, and the rest, my man must have left more than five thousand pounds behind along the way. It is a good thing that the Bank of England is so rich.'

Having made up his mind, he went to the *General Grant*, and was there when Mr Fogg and Aouda came on board. To his great surprise he also saw Passepartout in his strange clothes and long nose, so he hid in his cabin. There were so many passengers that he hoped his enemy would not see him. But today, towards the front of the ship, he suddenly met him.

Without saying a word, Passepartout jumped on Fix and, to

the great joy of a group of Americans (who immediately began to bet on the result of the fight), attacked him, striking him again and again.

When he had hit him a number of times, Passepartout felt much better and calmer. Fix got up slowly.

‘Have you finished?’ he asked coldly.

‘Yes, for the moment.’

‘Then come and have a talk with me.’

‘Have a talk with you! I—’

‘Yes, if you care about your master.’

Passepartout was so surprised by the calm way in which Fix spoke that he followed him. They both sat down.

‘You have given me a beating. Very well, I expected it. Now listen to me. Until now I have been your master’s enemy, but now I am on his side.’

‘Oh, at last, then, you believe him to be an honest man.’

‘No, I don’t,’ answered Fix coldly, ‘I believe him to be a thief. Be quiet, and let me speak. So long as Fogg was on British soil I tried to hold him back while I was waiting for the warrant to arrest him. I did all that I could do to stop him. I sent the priests from Bombay to Calcutta; I made you drunk at Hong Kong; I separated you from him and made him miss the boat to Yokohama.’

Passepartout listened, ready to fly at Fix again.

‘Now,’ Fix went on, ‘Mr Fogg seems to be going back to England. Very well, I will follow him. But from now on, I will help him in his journey as much as I have tried to stop his journey in the past. You see that my plan has changed. It has changed because it is in my interest to change it. I will add that your interest is the same as mine, since it is only in England that you will know whether you are serving an honest man or a thief.’

Passepartout listened carefully to what Fix was saying, and felt sure that Fix was not going to play any more tricks.

‘Are we friends?’ asked Fix.

‘No, not friends,’ answered Passepartout, ‘but we can help each other. If you start playing any more games with me, though, I will certainly break your neck!’

‘All right,’ agreed the detective calmly.