

'We must wait,' said one of the others. 'You know that Mr Fogg is a man of very exact habits. He never gets anywhere too late or too early. If he came into this room at the last moment I would not be surprised.'

'As for me,' said Andrew Stuart, 'even if I saw him I wouldn't believe it. He has certainly lost. The *China*, the only steamer by which he could have come from America in time, reached Liverpool yesterday. Here is the list of people who were on it, and the name of Phileas Fogg is not among them. I imagine that he has hardly reached America. He will be at least twenty days late.'

'That is certain,' said another. 'Tomorrow we shall only have to go to the bank and collect the money.'

The clock showed twenty minutes to nine.

'Five minutes more,' said Andrew Stuart.

The five friends looked at each other. Their hearts were perhaps beating a little faster than usual; even among those who were used to betting, this bet was for a very large sum of money.

'I would not give up my four thousand pounds,' said Andrew Stuart, 'if I were offered three thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine pounds for it!'

At that moment the clock showed sixteen minutes to nine. Only one minute more and the bet would be won. They began to count the seconds.

At the fortieth second, nothing happened. At the fiftieth second, nothing happened.

At the fifty-fifth second, a noise like thunder was heard outside the room – a noise of shouting.

At the fifty-seventh second, the door of the room opened and, before the hand of the clock reached the sixtieth second, Phileas Fogg appeared followed by a large crowd of people who had forced their way into the building. He said, in his usual calm voice: 'Here I am, gentlemen.'

Yes! Phileas Fogg himself.