

The Tour of the World in Eighty Days.

CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.

Leaving Benares, the railway followed in part the valley of the Ganges. Through the windows of the car, the weather being quite clear, appeared the varied country of Bharu, mountains covered with verdure, fields of barley, corn, and wheat, jungles full of green alligators, villages well kept, forests yet green. A few elephants, and zebras with large horns, came to bathe in the waters of the sacred river, and also, notwithstanding the advanced season and the already cold temperature, bands of Hindoo coolies, who were piously performing their holy ablutions. These faithful ones, the bitter enemies of Buddhism, are fervent sectaries of the Brahmism religion, which is incarnate in these three persons—Yahnu, the solar deity; Shiva, the divine personification of the natural forces; and Brahma, the supreme master of priests and legislators. But in what light would Brahma, Shiva, and Yahnu regard the rajahs of Benares, the fortified town of Benares, the great manufacturing and commercial city, where the principal opium market in India is held, Monghir, a more than European town, as English as Manchester or Birmingham, famous for its iron foundries, its manufactures of cutlery, and whose high chimneys cover with a black smoke the heavens of Benares—a real fat-blow in the country of dreams.

The night came, and in the midst of the howlings of the tigers, the bears, and the wolves, which were the locomotive, the train passed at full speed, and they saw nothing of the wonders of Benares, or Golconda, or Gour in ruins, or Mourahabad, the former capital, or Burdwan, or Hooghly, or Chandernagor, that French port in the Indian territory, which Passpartout would have had to see on his native flag floating.

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The train had stopped at the station. Passpartout first got out of the car, and was followed by Mr. Fogg, who aided his young countryman. Philias Fogg counted on going directly to the Hong Kong steamer, in order to fix Mrs. Aouda there comfortably, whom he did not wish to leave as long as she was in this country, so dangerous for her.

At that moment that Mr. Fogg was going out of the station a policeman approached him and said:—  
"Mr. Philias Fogg?"  
"I am he."  
"Is this your servant?" added the policeman, pointing to Passpartout.  
"Yes."  
"You will both be so kind as to follow me."  
Mr. Fogg made no movement indicating any surprise. This agent was a representative of the law, and for every Englishman the law is sacred. Passpartout, with his French habits, wanted to discuss the matter, but the policeman touched him with a stick, and Philias Fogg made him sign to obey.

"This young lady can accompany us," asked Mr. Fogg.  
"She can," replied the policeman. The policeman conducted Mr. Fogg, Mrs. Aouda, and Passpartout to a palik-gari, a sort of four-wheeled vehicle with four seats, drawn by two horses. They started. No one spoke during the twenty-minute ride.

Philias Fogg?

"Here I am," replied Mr. Fogg.  
"Passpartout?"  
"Present," replied Passpartout.  
"Good!" said Judge Obadiah. "For two days, prisoners, you have been looked for upon the arrival of all the travelers from Bombay."  
"But of what are we accused?" cried Passpartout impatiently.  
"You shall know now," replied the judge.  
"Sir," said Mr. Fogg then, "I am an English citizen, and have the right to be tried by my countrymen."  
"Have you been treated disrespectfully?" asked Mr. Obadiah.  
"Very well, let the complainants come in."  
Upon the order of the judge a door was opened, and three Hindoo priests were led in by a tipstaf.

"Well, well," murmured Passpartout, "they bring the rascals who were going to burn our young lady!"  
The priests stood up before the judge, and the clerk read in a loud voice a complaint of adultery, preferred against Mr. Philias Fogg and his servant, accused of having violated a place consecrated by the Brahmism religion, and of having heard the charge!  
"You have heard the charge?" the judge asked Philias Fogg.  
"Yes, sir," replied Mr. Fogg, consulting his watch, "and I confess it."  
"Ah! You confess?"  
"I confess and expect these three priests to confine in their turn what they were going to do at the pagoda of Pillaji."  
The priests looked at each other. They did not seem to understand the words of the accused.

"Well," cried Passpartout impetuously, "at the pagoda of Pillaji, where they were going to burn the victim, and the faithful stretched along its shores."  
All this panorama passed like a flash, and frequently a cloud of steam concealed its details from the travelers. The crowd could scarcely see the fort of Chunar, twenty miles to the southeast of Benares, the old stronghold of the rajahs of Benares, the fortified town of Benares, the great manufacturing and commercial city, where the principal opium market in India is held, Monghir, a more than European town, as English as Manchester or Birmingham, famous for its iron foundries, its manufactures of cutlery, and whose high chimneys cover with a black smoke the heavens of Benares—a real fat-blow in the country of dreams.

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