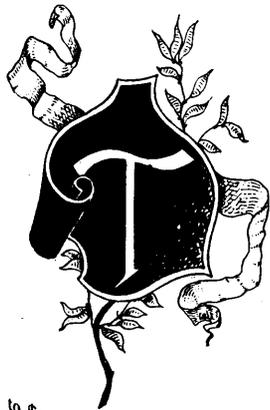


# A CHEAP TRIP TO ENGLAND.

BY JOHN B. PYKE, B. A.



HERE are undoubtedly large numbers of Canadians, both young and old, who would be glad of an opportunity of visiting the Mother Country; but, because they think a trip to England is necessarily a very expensive luxury, they do not avail themselves of the opportunity when it offers itself in the shape, perhaps, of a slack season of work.

Large numbers of men are possessed of amounts of money, varying from \$100 to \$1,000, and the nature of their occupation in many instances allows them to take lengthy holidays.

Such men, instead of taking a trip to England, spend two or three weeks at some expensive sea-side resort in Canada or the United States, and spend there from \$100 to \$200, yet they would much rather visit England in many cases than spend their time at some fashionable watering place in America.

I propose to relate, in this paper, my experiences while making such a trip at a cost of not quite one dollar and twenty-five cents a day. I was away from the 2nd July to the 15th November, 1890; my total expenses for that period of 137 days being one hundred and seventy dollars.

There are others who, not having any money laid by, yet have incomes of between \$400 and \$600 per annum; these men, by saving 10 per cent. of their salaries, would soon have an amount sufficient to pay the expenses of a journey to western Europe and back again.

Say, for instance, that a young man has a salary of \$500 per annum; by foregoing some of his pleasures, and by endeavouring at the same time to obtain the necessaries of life at a somewhat cheaper rate, he will often be able to save as much as 15 per cent. of his income. This rate of saving will, in two years, give him \$150, with which sum he can cross the ocean and spend from four to eight weeks in France, Germany or the British Isles.

Our vessel, the S.S. Vancouver, left Montreal on the 2nd of July, early in the morning, and we arrived in Liverpool on the afternoon of the 12th July. I embarked as an intermediate passenger. It is a mistake, however, for any one travelling intermediate to secure a passage in a popular steamer. These large popular vessels are crowded by cabin passengers, who are favoured at the expense of the intermediate voyagers.

The accommodation provided for the latter class is inferior to that afforded by less popular steamers, and the rate of passage is higher. It is true that the journey is accomplished in somewhat quicker time, but this is not necessarily an advantage to the tourist.

It is better to get your money changed on this side of the water. Get sovereigns or half sovereigns, with a few shillings in silver. The only man on board ship that should be tipped is the steward, and be sure that it is your own steward that you tip.

Our voyage was uneventful until we reached the Straits of Belle Isle, where we were delayed for nineteen hours by icebergs. Such a difference of scene and change of temperature, from the stifling hot streets of Montreal to fields and mountains of ice, was remarkable. One cannot help being struck by the varied shades of green and blue to be seen on half submerged pieces of ice.

I stayed five days at Liverpool, living on St. Paul's Square. Prices of board and lodging at this house rather high. Two shillings per day for room and a shilling for each full meal. These rates, namely, \$1.25 per diem, would not be exorbitant in Canada, but are high for England. The house was, however, in a part of the city very convenient for steamboats or railway stations. The proprietor's agents came on board the tender ships canvassing for guests. If other lodgings can be secured it is best not to patronize passenger agents' establishments, as they charge more for their accommodation than most boarding-house keepers.

I visited the Walker Art Gallery and the Natural History Museum while in Liverpool. In the former institution, among other good pictures, are to be seen "Lorenzo and Isabella," by Millais; "Ruth and Naomi," by Calderon; "Samson surprised by Philistines," painted by S. J. Solomon, and "Sintram," by Louisa Starr.

In the Aquarium of the Natural History Museum there is a very good collection of fish, chiefly indigenous to the Mersey and various pieces of water in the neighbourhood of Liverpool. I was much interested in watching the movements of the "plaice," a broad, flat fish with blue, beadlike eyes and white body, thin as a pan-cake. There is also a collection of reptiles, among which the European and American salamanders are noteworthy.

By the way, why do we not establish Natural History Museums in Montreal and other Canadian cities.

This Liverpool museum is free to the public daily, and is much appreciated by the children of the public schools.

In the Museum, above the Aquarium, are to be seen the boots and gloves worn by Henry the Sixth at the battle of Hexham, A.D., 1463; also, a velvet smoking cap and shoes, worn by Lord Byron when in Greece.

A Canadian cannot fail to notice the extreme poverty and wretchedness of numbers of the people. Hundreds of barefooted and bareheaded women are to be met with on the principal streets of the city. It is to be remembered, however, that on the other side of the water people generally dress below, or, at least, according to their means, whereas Canadians often run into debt in order to be well dressed.

Near one of the great thoroughfares of Liverpool I witnessed a strange scene. Several hundred women, mostly middle-aged or elderly, were congregated in a field, holding a bazaar. Each woman had spread upon the ground before her a large and varied assortment of garments, which she endeavoured to dispose of, shouting out the merits of each particular garment at the top of her voice. It was a comical scene, but as I was the only man present I felt that I was rather "de trop," and soon went elsewhere.

For several days after the 12th of July party feeling runs very high in the Liverpool slums. Frequent processions of boys and barefooted girls are to be seen carrying green or orange emblems, according to the taste and popular opinion of the locality: this is due to the large Irish element in the city.

Many other matters I noted, of which it is not worth while speaking, as every stranger in Liverpool must have made much the same comments.

On the 16th July I crossed over to the Isle of Man, a district which I had always had a longing to see.

I went over on one of the steamers of the Isle of Man Steamer Packet Company, leaving Liverpool at 1 p.m. and arriving at Douglas at 4.30, the distance being upwards of 70 miles. These steamers travel at the rate of over twenty miles an hour and are said to be the fastest in the world.

The Isle of Man is highly interesting to the tourist, especially if he have a taste for antiquarian lore.

The country abounds in picturesque ruins, castles, abbeys, churches and ancient tombstones. But most tourists care more for beautiful landscapes and various kinds of amusements. There is plenty of boating, driving and bathing to be had during the day time, and at night there is dancing at the principal hotels, and pleasure gardens; also, numerous concerts and theatrical entertainments.

As for beautiful scenery, there is no lack of it in any part of the island.

The Manx people of by-gone days were very superstitious, and considering their surroundings this is not to be wondered at. There is something of the weird and the romantic about



OLD KIRK BRADDAN, ISLE OF MAN.

all their scenery, whether by the sea-shore, on the hills, or in the valleys.

On this small island, not as large as the island of Montreal, there are twenty-three mountains and high hills, varying from 250 to over 2,000 feet.

Now, most of the land is under cultivation, but last century it was covered with thick woods. When these circumstances, together with the isolated position of the country, are taken into account, one can believe the statements which Waldron makes and which Scott quotes in his "Notes to Peveril of the Peak."

Among the young people is frequently to be seen to this day a face of pleasing but elf-like expression.

The aged of both sexes occasionally furnish types which remind you of the descriptions of hobgoblins, etc., with which the local traditions are filled.

It is to be regretted that the Isle of Man is overrun yearly by thousands of wanton pleasure seekers, who amuse themselves by cutting their names upon and otherwise defacing the monuments of antiquity. In fact vandalism is supreme on the Isle of Man. The castles are turned into hotels, and many churches and venerable memorials left unprotected.

Americans are apt to destroy monuments by bringing away pieces of them to be kept as souvenirs of their visit; but the vandalism of the Cockney and the average inhabitant of Lancashire is unjustifiable, for they destroy in ignorance and wantonness, merely to gratify an innate propensity of destructiveness.



CROSSAG BRIDGE, ISLE OF MAN.

At first sight I was disappointed with Douglas; it seemed a mere pleasure resort. I hate fashionable places which involve high prices, little personal freedom, and much artificiality in everything.

After taking a short ramble about the town I secured lodgings on the Queen's Promenade, at the Nantwick House, a private boarding establishment.

This house, situated on the water front, charged five shillings per day for full board, or three and sixpence for lodging, breakfast and tea. This latter arrangement I adopted, as it gave me more liberty during the day.

Having bought a guide book I set about looking up the places of interest mentioned in it.

A district called "the Fairy Ground" I discovered to be occupied by the fish market. Near it are some quaint streets, the "slums" of Douglas. One of them, "Great Well street," I found to be just 16 feet wide. Branching off from this was another thoroughfare, which, including a narrow sidewalk on either side and the roadway in the centre, was only 12 feet wide. This was called "Little Well street." I went a short distance along this, and then, thinking that I must be getting near the bottom of the well, as I could see no outlet ahead, I faced about and returned to the Market Place. These "slums" are, however, quite safe for a stranger to walk in at any hour of the day or night. I afterwards took lodgings in this vicinity (Lord street) for two days in order to see what a Manx slum was like.