

England to Australia by Orient Royal Mail Line

By
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Of Victoria

Having finished my business in Europe, I decided on Thursday, the 22nd of December, to leave per R. M. S. Orontes for Australia the following day.

I caught the train at St. Pancras Station for Tilbury Docks, whence our ship is booked to depart.

The train carried me swiftly to my destination, and upon arrival at the docks I saw my luggage safely on board, and repaired to the promenade deck to witness the departure.

Our vessel was gaily decorated with flags, and to the accompaniment of the ship's orchestra and the farewells of the passengers, we were warped out into the muddy Thames.

The historic river was crammed with shipping from all over the world. Giant passenger vessels lay side by side with dirty, blunt-nosed tramps; river tugs darted here and there through the press; grimy, lumbering coal barges wallowed down river, looking strangely in keeping with the yellow waters and leaden sky. Now we are off!

As our little busybody of a tug turns us into the main stream we see four American battleships lying at anchor. They are part of the United States fleet which is visiting England. The tug casts off her lines, the bells fall below us clang, and a voyage on which we shall go more than halfway round the world is begun, the longest and most interesting voyage one can take today on a regular line of passenger steamships, practically 14,000 miles, in 42 days.

Next morning we tarry a moment to drop our pilot at Portland. Inside the huge breakwater lay the English Dreadnoughts and four American battleships, the Americans easily distinguished from their English sisters by their peculiar fighting tops.

A few hours after leaving Portsmouth we receive a wireless from the Daily Mail wishing us bon voyage and a Merry Christmas.

We run down the channel and wake on Christmas morning to find ourselves in the Bay of Biscay. Not for us is the bay a place of heavy seas and dirty weather, a sea to be dreaded by passengers prone to the terrible mal de mer. On this morning the bay resembles a huge lake covered with foam-crested curling wavelets, sparkling in the brightly shining sun.

It is a unique Christmas. In the morning the bells ring and service is conducted in the saloon. The afternoon is spent on deck enjoying the crisp salt breeze and warm sunshine, which feels good to us who have just come from six weeks of rain in England.

For our Christmas dinner—the dining saloon has been tastefully decorated with evergreens and flags, and everyone enjoys himself immensely. I have to smile at the conclusion:

We have been supplied with bon bons and everyone has taken the caps and placed them in their heads. It is curious to see grave elderly men, filled with the spirit of the occasion, take ridiculous paper bonnets and place them on their heads, and then glance furtively around to see if anyone is laughing at the grotesque effect.

Next day we sight the coast of Portugal, and run south all day. The sun shines brightly, and it is hard to believe that a couple of days ago we were shivering in London fogs.

Through our glasses we can see quaint little villages nestling among the valleys of the sea shore. Toward night we pass the mouth of the Tagus, and high on a towering cliff is situated the castle to which King Manuel fled during the recent revolution.

On the 27th we enter the harbor of Gibraltar. The Rock forms an imposing spectacle as we come to anchor a hundred yards or so from the town built along its edge. A tender takes us ashore, where we are besieged by ragged urchins of all sorts with postal cards, curios, etc., to sell. It is almost necessary to belabor them before we can proceed in peace.

It is a quaint place; little, narrow streets running in all directions, down which amble tiny donkeys laden with enormous bundles of fagots or merchandise. Women and children, clad in nondescript garments, are everywhere in evidence, and as I watch I see Greeks, Arabs, Frenchmen, negroes, Spaniards, Turks, Hindus, Englishmen—every nationality seems to be represented here. I am told it is the most cosmopolitan spot on earth.

As we look up the precipitous sides of the fortress, hard enough to climb in themselves without the menace of the frowning batteries, we know to be concealed there, we can well believe the place impregnable.

We leave about 4 p.m. and run through the Straits of Gibraltar with the coast of Morocco on one hand and Spain on the other.

Next morning finds us running up the Gulf of Lyons. A heavy gale is blowing and the sea is running high. Our big ship tosses about, plunging with a shudder into the heavy head seas and tossing the spray high above her funnels; for all that she is a splendid sea boat. The ocean resembles a huge snowfield with its mass of foam-crested waves.

At 8 p.m. we reach Marseilles, the big sea port on the south coast of Spain, where we take on mail and passengers. We leave Marseilles and run across the Gulf of Genoa, then south-east through the Ligurian Sea. About noon on the 30th we pass close to the northern coast of Corsica, famous for all time as the birth-place of Napoleon. Off our port bow lies Elba, a rugged, barren-looking island, whence Napoleon escaped to make his last attempt to dominate the world. Our imagination pictures the ship beating into the bay before us under cover of darkness, the eager watchers

on shore, and the stealthy departure of Napoleon to menace the world once more with his insatiable desire for power. A few hours later we pass the Island of Monte Christo, made famous in the stories of Alexandre Dumas.

On the morning of the 31st we enter the beautiful Bay of Naples and cast anchor. It is an entrancing picture we gaze upon. The quaint, jumbled terraces rising tier upon tier in a great half-circle from the water's edge up the slopes of the hills, which form the background, to be crowned with palaces and dwellings, shining in the rays of the morning sun. Over all is the perfect Italian sky, rivaling the deep blue of the waters at our feet. On the far side of the bay rises a dull rugged-looking mountain, from the summit of which from time to time a puff of smoke rises to mingle with the low-lying clouds about the crater. It is Mt. Vesuvius.

Half an hour's ride from here are situated the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii, which, destroyed by this frowning monster on our right, lay buried for 1700 years, until excavations were begun by the French one hundred years ago.

A party of us hire a guide and are taken ashore. On landing we are besieged by flocks of ragged beggars, all wanting to sell some tawdry article for about twenty times its value. There are many hundreds of people in Naples who live entirely on what they worm out of tourists. They catch sight of me and, with the shout of "Yankee, Yankee!" close around. An ordinary tourist is good game, but a Yankee is a bird to be thoroughly plucked before he departs. We are all millionaires according to them.

On landing, our guide hires carriages and we drive to the Cathedral, a magnificent pile, costing some million of ducats, and from thence proceed to the Museum, where we view priceless collections of ancient Roman and Greek statues and paintings. Also we see thousands of relics from Pompeii and Herculaneum, statues, paintings, mosaics, fruit, articles of food, musical and medical instruments, all in a state of preservation which makes it hard to believe they have lain buried for centuries under lava and ashes.

One is struck by the evident age of everything in Naples. We can easily imagine that anything we see was the same centuries ago.

We pass through narrow, filthy streets, crowded with a motley collection of picturesque mortals. Old women, reminding us of the hags and witches we knew in our fairy tale days; potted about. Aged cripples and young men, clothed mostly in rags, lounge about in shaded doorways. Bare-footed, filthy urchins dart in and out among the queer-looking vehicles drawn by tiny donkeys, some of their drivers standing up like charioteers, yelling and shouting joyously.

Soldiers and gendarmes mingle with the throng, adding yet another phase to the riot of color. And everywhere are priests, dark, sombre-looking creatures, shuffling along, and now and then a friar, clad in brown cassock and wooden sandals.

Our guide describes Naples as a city of priests, churches and beggars.

As we drive along boys perch themselves behind our carriage, offering flowers and fruit for sale; others run alongside with postal cards or curios. Getting out of the business portion of the city, we see the dwellings of the better class, the green lawns set with lemon and orange trees and a profusion of beautiful flowers.

We return to the ship to find her infested with peddlers, their goods spread over the promenade deck, who try to convince us with more persistency than delicacy that their wares are "very nice."

Around the ship are various boats, containing singing girls and musicians and others, in which are crippled and blind beggars shouting for pennies.

We hoist anchor about four o'clock and Naples is soon lost to view.

Running south through the Tyrrhenian Sea, we pass Stomboli and enter the Straits of Messina, which separate Sicily from Italy. The straits are quite narrow, enabling us to see plainly the green hills which form the coast lines. We pass close to Messina and Reggio, and we find it hard to imagine those peaceful-looking spots as the scenes of that awful catastrophe that wiped out thousands of lives and caused a whole world to shudder with horror.

We do not see Mt. Etna, as it is night time when we round the southernmost point of Italy and run north through the Ionian Sea and Gulf of Taranto to Taranto, where we take on passengers and mail, and run southeast again, passing Mona and Crete on our way to Port Said and the Suez Canal.

Late in the afternoon of the 4th we sight the fishing fleet off the mouth of the Nile. Quaint-looking craft these, with their high bows and sterns and picturesque crews. As we look at them we imagine that centuries ago they were much the same. Surely their dark-skinned, savage-looking crews have not changed much!

As we enter the mouth of the Canal and look about the wide entrance covered with shipping, we are filled with admiration of the man whose pluck and skill made this possible, where once was only burning desert; and we think with sorrow of him breaking his heart in his vain endeavor to penetrate Panama.

Our ship is moored in the stream about 100 feet from the shore, and we see Port Said stretching back from the edge of the Canal, not a very imposing place to look at,

but here, were the riff-raff of the world is said to congregate, and where I am told a \$5 bill buys a man and his knife also, and having been warned to keep away from the native quarter, I am looking forward to some experience out of the common. But it is not to be. Cholera has broken out at Naples, and because we have touched there we are quarantined, whereat everyone swears most dismally.

We are to take on 1500 tons of coal here, and the coaling of a liner at Port Said is a sight to remember. It is somewhere near midnight as I stand looking down on three huge scows moored alongside the ship. On the ends of the scows are hung iron cages filled with flaming coals, at which every once in a while some black-faced imp in red turban and filthy rags pokes vigorously, sending showers of sparks into the darkness. Along the ship's sides are hung clusters of electric lights, and from the bowels of the scows emerge crowds of wierd-looking creatures with baskets of coal on their heads, which they carry up planks to the chutes, and then descend yelling and shrieking for more. The scows simply swarm with them. It is a strange scene, the streams of men clad in flapping garments and colored turbans emerging from the blackness, the lurid glare from the fires lighting up the glistening, savage faces, the blazing braziers sending up their showers of sparks to fall hissing into the surrounding water lit up by the red glow, and the howling hoard making the night hideous with their wild yells. They look like nothing so much as a mass ofimps from the infernal regions, and surely that gnome-like creature, dancing and yelling as he pokes the fires with his glowing bar, is a demon!

Having taken our coal aboard, we proceed on our way down the Canal. It is midnight when we start, so it is morning before we can really study our surroundings to advantage.

We find that the Canal was opened in 1868, and cost \$120,000,000. It is 120 feet wide and 30 feet deep in the centre, and 99 miles long. Between 4,000 and 5,000 ships pass through the Canal annually, and pay on an average \$5,000 for the right. Our ship being of large size, pays \$10,000 for the 18 hours we are in the Canal.

It is a wonderfully interesting scene we have before us this bright African morning. To starboard lies the storied land of Lower Egypt; on our port the desert stretches away to those faroff foothills which, blending with the sky, form a picture to make an artist exclaim with delight. Strange-looking creatures, clothed in flowing robes, and turbans come tumbling out of their huts to greet the ship as she passes, laughing and calling merry greetings in Arabic. Queer little homes they live in, built of reeds thatched with mud. Yonder, arid waste, its tall palms and luxuriant vegetation together with the strange, almost unreal, coloring the desert gives forms a brilliant spectacle.

As I look yet more closely, I see large numbers of camels with their riders reclining in the shade. A man rises to survey us. On his back is slung a long gun. He carries daggers in his colored sash, and his turban resembles a nun's headdress. He is a Bedouin a typical son of the desert.

I cross the deck and there, far out over the desert, shimmering in the now fiercely burning sun, a camel and its rider are making for the foothills. I stand and wonder how man can live in such a waste, and where yonder rider is going, until finally he is lost to view behind some desert dune.

Not only from a scenic point of view is the country interesting. Over this desert once toiled the Children of Israel fleeing from bondage in that land across the Canal, with Moses at their head. Yonder are the wells Moses dug for the thirsting people. One day's camel ride beyond those foothills will bring the traveler to Mt. Sinai. Down this road we are passing once came Abraham and later Joseph, and, more interesting still, along the same road Jesus fled hundreds of years later.

It is strange that we should come under the spell of this land, shrouded in mystery, where thousands of years ago these immortal characters lived and suffered, where so much of the world's history has had its foundation, a land peopled in bygone ages by races whose magnificence and the splendor of whose civilization causes the modern world to wonder.

And so, lost in the interest of the scene, we come to Suez and the end of the Canal.

We do not land at Suez, as we are still flying the yellow flag, and after landing some passengers we proceed on our way down the Gulf of Suez to the Red Sea. Many passengers look forward to the heat with misgiving, and indeed it is hot when we enter. One is in a continual state of perspiration. The only place you are cool during the day is in a bath tub full of cold sea water, and you are not liable to shiver even there.

On the morning of the 8th we pass through Hell's Gates, the entrance to the Straits of Bab el Mandeb, and run through them with the coast of Arabia on one hand and Somaliland on the other, and into the Gulf of Aden. It is as hot here as anywhere on earth. We enter the Arabian Sea, and then, day after day, sail south and east for Colombo in Ceylon.

Our days are passed in playing many merry games peculiar to life on a modern passenger liner. In the evenings we have card parties, concerts, amateur theatricals and balls. There are the nights we spend on deck also. A soft, cool breeze plays about us, immeasurably

grateful after the heat of the day. The blue-black vault above us is studded with countless thousands of luminous stars shining with the brilliancy peculiar to the tropics. The soft light of the moon turns the placid sea into a lake of silver, through which our ship glides swiftly, throwing from her bows little curling waves that glisten in the moon's rays. The nights are ideal.

Of the deck games, cricket is my favorite. I gain a place on the team through a happy faculty I have of fielding the ball. The wide promenade deck makes an excellent playing area and the game is fast and exciting. We have many pleasant matches, and the rivalry between the different teams is keen. The officers hold the championship, as they defeat the first and second saloon teams, and also the engineers.

We are approaching the night of our fancy dress ball, and everywhere is preparation. The dance comes off on the 12th. It is a great success and everyone enjoys it immensely. A portion of the wide promenade deck is closed in from the sea, and gaily decorated with flags and colored electric lights. The deck, when waxed, makes an admirable floor. Seats are arranged for spectators, and the whole effect is splendid, considering we are in the middle of the Arabian Sea. The costumes are exceptionally good and the whole affair goes off without a hitch.

About 4 p.m. on Saturday, the 14th, we sight the palm-girt shores of Ceylon, and a couple of hours later enter the harbor of Colombo. It is crowded with shipping, as Colombo is a port of call for many passenger lines. We are soon surrounded by boats of all kinds, and a perfect babel of sound arises from about the ship. The catamarang is much in evidence. I go ashore with a party of friends, and we spend some time viewing the shops, where sunning Cingaliese merchants try with much persistency to sell us their wares.

We hire rickshaws, of which there are hundreds in Ceylon. One of the men who drew me had been in the game thirty years, and he was a veritable living skeleton. I asked a Colombo man why they did not train some of the runners for Marathon races. He told me that these men, who draw a loaded rickshaw for 18 and 20-miles a day, cannot run a mile outside the shafts. It is a peculiar thing, but he assured me it was quite true.

Tiring of the town, we drive along the seashore to a splendid hotel, situated in the midst of tall cocoa palms and beautiful tropical gardens. All is gaiety and laughter here. It is Saturday night and the elite of Colombo have gathered for the weekly ball.

Bare-footed natives attend swiftly but silently to our wants. We enjoy an excellent dinner and repair to the gardens to smoke.

We find here the very acme of tropical beauty. The green lawns are covered with a profusion of brilliantly-colored plants and flowers. Overhead the tall palms rustle in the breeze, which, laden with the perfumes of spices and flowers, plays about us. Fireflies dart hither and thither, forming little gleaming points of light in the surrounding darkness. Between the tree trunks we can see the foamed breakers curling in to fall with a crash on the white sands of the beach, shining like silver in the moon's rays. It is really a fairy-like scene.

Returning through the hotel, we see Indian jugglers seated on the entrance steps performing the feats that have made them famous. On our way back to the ship my friend and I get between the shafts of our rickshaws and putting our astounded coolies in the seats we tear down the main boulevard at top speed with the populace staring in open-eyed wonder at the unusual spectacle. Our Colombo friend lectures us soundly when he succeeds in catching up. He says we will lose caste. No white man ever works with his hands in Ceylon.

We leave Colombo early next morning and start on our nine-days' run through the Indian Ocean for Perth in Western Australia.

Two days out from Colombo we cross the Equator at 8 in the evening. King Neptune has sent a message to the captain in the morning, which reads:

"His Majesty King Neptune and suite will board your vessel at 8 p.m., in Lat. 0 deg. 0 min., to negotiate with you and your passengers who have not previously crossed his dominions to pay the penalty in accordance with the ancient custom."

Punctual to the minute the King and his suite arrive over the ship's side clad in outrageous garments. Neptune parades the ship and having delivered his judgments, returns to the sea, promising to return next day to initiate those he has found.

Next day the King returns, and with much pomp and ceremony initiates his victims to the great amusement of those who have been through it before.

Four days south of the Equator, I cast no shadow, as the sun is directly overhead. That is to say, what shadow I do cast is directly underneath me.

On the 24th we arrive at Fremantle, on the west coast of Australia, and having taken on many passengers, we proceed on our way across the Australian bight.

Early one morning the dread cry of "Man overboard!!" rings over the ship. Instantly all is excitement. The ship swings round in a great circle, the boats are lowered and for three hours they search for the unfortunate man. He was seen for an instant in our wake. Some say he laughed when the lifebuoys were thrown to him and swam away. At any rate we never

saw him again. The general belief is that he committed suicide.

We touch at Adelaide and Melbourne, and early on the 2nd of February we sight the frowning heads which guard the entrance to Sydney, and a few hours later we enter the finest harbor in the world, and the Queen City of the South lies before us. Our journey is over.

I eagerly anticipate the moment of landing, as I have been round the world in 18 weeks, and nearly twice round, in distance, in 10 months. I am a bit tired of traveling.

But I think we shall always look back with pleasure on our journey by Orient Royal Mail.

DR. GRENFELL AND HIS WORK.

(Continued from page six.)

Conch, healing many of the folk, helping more and at the end of that period the man who had suffered with the hemorrhage was so far restored that with new dogs the Doctor set out for Canada Bay, still traveling seaward.

"There we had some interesting cases. One of these involved an operation, that of opening a kneecap and removing a loose body, with the result that a fisherman who had long been crippled was made quite well again.

"Then there came a second call from Conch. Seventeen men came for the physician in case there were no dogs to be had. To this call the Doctor immediately responded, and, having treated patients at Conch and by the way, he set out upon the return journey to St. Anthony, fearing that his absence had already been unduly prolonged.

"He had not gone far on his way when he fell in with another sled bearing a box in which lay an old woman bound to St. Anthony in care of her sons, to have her foot amputated.

"Crossing the salt water ice, one of the dogs fell through. There was a biting north-west wind blowing and the temperature was 10 degrees below zero. While the Doctor was still a mile away from the land he got off the sled to try the ice. It suddenly gave way and in he fell. The Doctor managed to scramble out, and as the nearest house was ten miles distant, and it meant death by freezing to change clothing in the wind that was blowing, the Doctor raced his dogs for a patch of woods on the mainland. He had to run beside the sled himself in order to keep up his circulation, and to prevent the clothing from freezing into a solid mass and by the time he reached the shelter of the woods and got into dry clothing he felt as if he was racing in a coat of mail.

"At St. Anthony he amputated the woman's foot and looked after the boy with the clubfoot. In the meantime a sled arrived in haste from a point on the northwest coast, a settlement 120 miles distant. The Doctor was needed there—and the Doctor went."

There is a new proverb on the Labrador coast. The folk say, when a great wind blows, "This'll bring Grenfell." Often it does. He is impatient of delay, and fretted by inaction. A gale is the wind for him—a wind to take him swiftly to the place ahead. Had he been a weakling he would have died on the coast long ago. Had he been a coward a multitude of terrors would long ago have driven him back to a comfortable life in a civilized community.

He has outailed the Labrador skippers themselves—outdared them—performed deeds of courage under their very eyes that they would shiver to contemplate—never in a foolhardy spirit, but always with the object in view of getting to some place more quickly, that he may the sooner perform some act of kindly service.

So he has the heart and hand of every honest man on the Labrador coast, for he smother's his little vessel in water, bumps icebergs, scrapes rocks, and courts death to reach them—when they need him.

King George has heard of his work, and has summoned him to Windsor that he might hear of it at first hand. Millionaire bank presidents, as well as fisher folk, are his friends; kings as well as commoners.

STILL IN FANCY

"Didn't you tell me last summer that you were going to build a concrete house?" asks Miggles.

"Yes," answers Gluggims, "but after looking over the architect's estimates I left the house in the abstract."

HIGH SENSE OF DUTY

City Visitor (to farmer)—Do you keep good hens?

Farmer—I should say I do. Some of them say "Now I lay me" twice a day.

"I wonder," remarked the youthful astronomer, who was very slow in doing what was expected of him, "if—if you will let me associate you with a star—Venus, perhaps, the star of love?"

"Well, no," replied the young lady addressed, thoughtfully—"I would rather that you thought of me as Saturn."

"Indeed! Why?"

"Oh, well, you know, didn't you tell me that Saturn has a ring?"

He bought one on the following day.

CURRENT T

H. C. Elliott has been general passenger agent Trans-Pacific and J. D. ...

The newspaper and ... many have gone for a ...

The Russian prime ... Stolypin, who resigned ...

In a very short time, ... next Sunday there will ...

The show of motors in ... and the entertainments ...

It is harvest time now ... and there is a strike at ...

Russia and China are ... so both the government ...

It was shown a short ... there is no law in Canada ...

Two big American lumber ... who own mills and timber ...

The ... and the ... and ...

Honolulu has been ... city is the capital of ...

The Jordan river, will ... be ...

There are now ten who ... ready for service on the ...

The burning of a great ... New York was one of the ...

A terribly sad accident ... Arrow Park on the Arrow ...

There is trouble in the ... the province of Alberta. A ...

It is hard to believe that ... he found so wicked as to ...