

The Baron's Journey  
*Through the British empire*

Baron Von Hübner

1886

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San Francisco

July 14 to 28.

The Californian nation—Progress and changes—Iron buildings—Cliffhouse—The Presidio  
—The Chinese—Immigrants—The three transcontinental lines.

THERE is something indescribably strange in stepping on shore after long voyages. On embarking, one knew that for a certain period there would be a separation from the rest of the world. One was prepared for this, and one endures the privation without excessive suffering, sometimes one even enjoys it. There is a feeling of freedom from the cares and worries of daily life, and of being assured against the receipt of bad news. This sort of recluse life, which knows nothing of letters or newspapers, is not without its charms. But the moment the traveller sets foot on *terra firma* he is seized with a feverish impatience, mixed with gloomy misgivings. Scarcely was I settled in the Palace Hotel, when large packets of letters were brought to me, many of them with black-edged envelopes. This was the only sad day of my travels.

Let us see what the city of 'Frisco' has been doing with herself during the thirteen years which have passed since I last saw her. She has changed a great deal and gained a great deal, gained in size, wealth, and population. I will add that the population also has changed, and changed for the better. The city was founded by Yankees, by men from the Atlantic States. They gave it their own peculiar features, which they stamped also on the first generation of the inhabitants born here. But since then, through the admixture of so many foreign elements, especially Irish and German, the type has been modified ; in other words, a Californian nation has been formed. The face of the American of the East is generally long and oval, while the young Californian has a round face, with a comparatively large mouth, but thin lips. Most of the women are pretty. You meet them in the streets, in the tramcars, on the lifts of your hotel ; in short, everywhere. Their delicate features, the daintily rounded chin, and the graceful and upright figure, give them a peculiar charm, and an indescribable something that distinguishes them from the Anglo-Saxon race. The men are well made, and of a less aerial nature ; but both men and women have a Southern appearance. This cannot be the result of an infusion of Mexican blood. The Mexicans, who, moreover, are far from numerous in San Francisco, marry among themselves. The Irish, on the contrary, have taken root here, and yet this new Californian people has little in common with the children of the Emerald Isle. Is it the result of the climate ? Is it the mysterious influence said to be exercised by the soil on those whom it supports ? But, however that may be, I find here a nation which did not exist in 1871, and is distinct from any other nations represented there. The old pioneers, the survivors of the past, say to me of this young nation, ' The Californians are light-hearted, gay, and extravagant ; they love amusement. The Yankee is busy, he thinks only of making money, which he reckons on enjoying later on, when perhaps he will have lost the capacity for enjoying it.'

The streets are more animated than formerly, and the business quarter, radiating in all directions, has expanded itself from the heart of the city. But the western suburbs show the greatest changes ; or, to speak more precisely, the detached blocks of houses have become streets with magnificent squares. The architecture is perhaps rather pretentious, and the style too hybrid ; too much effort to make every house a palace, but the whole effect is wonderful. And all these buildings follow the rise and fall of the cliffs, which are more or less steep, sometimes almost perpendicular, and always covered with sand. Tramcars, attached to a cable moving in an underground trench, manage to surmount these obstacles, in defiance of the laws of gravitation and as if they were of no consequence. No doubt if during the descent you should happen to find yourself leaning on your neighbour's shoulders, he takes his revenge when the next ascent begins. These tramcars run from daybreak to well into the night, and are put up at night in little houses, several storeys high ; when each car comes in after the day's work is over, it is hoisted up by means of hydraulic power. This is a mode of economising space.

Mechanism, altogether, plays a great part in the life of the American, and especially in that of the Californian. At the Californian Bank I was shown a safe, the lock of which was connected with clock-work, and could only be opened at a certain hour. My ignorance of these matters only increases my wonder. The more scarce servants become in this democratic world, the more constantly are the forces of nature made subservient to the will of the individual. The telephone has become a part of their daily life : the movable cable, assisted by steam, is superseding the horse and the locomotive. A single individual now suffices to do what formerly, without mechanical assistance, required a considerable number of men. Mechanism finds its way even into the churches. In the Roman Catholic cathedral the priest descends from the altar, stops on the steps of the choir, and waits for the pulpit which is pushed along on rails by the sacristan. At the end of the sermon it is removed in the same manner. I doubt not that the sacristan's days are numbered, and that ere long he will find himself replaced by a pulley or a cable.

This subjection of the forces of nature to the habits of daily life has great advantages. But it has also its drawbacks. You can encourage a servant or a workman by a smile, you can check him by a stern look. Steam and machinery are insensible to approval or blame. What services you require of them they give with mathematical precision. But beware if you make a mistake with the piston or the wheel. If you do, Nature will take vengeance for her subjection, she will seize, upset, crush, and kill you.

Architecture has made great progress, and seems to be entering on a phase of transformation that deserves notice. In California earthquakes are of frequent occurrence, and constitute a sort of local calamity. San Francisco is not exempt. In order to avoid the dangers which result from them, the inhabitants are beginning to resort to iron construction. Palace Hotel, where I am putting up, occupies an entire ' block,' that is to say, a square piece of ground bounded by four streets crossing one another at right angles. In order to give this immense caravanserai the solidity necessary to resist subterranean shocks, and to secure it at the same time against fires, it is constructed entirely of iron. It is a huge cage, the upright bars of which, deeply rooted in the earth, are connected together by girders also of iron, thus forming a kind of lattice filled in with brick-work. Wood is nowhere used. This building, which is enormously high, contains 700 bed-rooms, and almost as many bath-rooms. The style is adapted to the materials employed. It is the largest iron structure in the world ; and perhaps it will serve as a model for the architects of the twentieth century. There are several ' elevators,' which are in motion for eighteen hours out of the twenty-four, and perform in that space of time 500 trips. Whenever you meet a lady in one of these ' lifts,' you are obliged to take your hat off. This act of politeness to the fair sex is *de rigueur*. I am told, throughout

North America, and appears to account for the frequency of colds in the head among the citizens of the United States.

These elevators are found also in some private houses, and in the large commercial establishments. I ring the bell at a photographer's studio ; the door is opened, and I tumble all at once into the lift which takes me up immediately to the top story.

The famous Cliffhouse, which thirteen years ago was separated from the city by a regular desert composed of sand-hills, gave me then the impression of being one of the most desolate corners of the globe. Save for the ' pavilion' itself, which served as a mark of union with the civilised world, there was nothing but cliffs, three rocky islets inhabited by seals and sea-fowl ; and beyond it the infinite ocean and the rocks stretching northward along the shore. Now a railway, which connects Cliffhouse with San Francisco, and a grand hotel-restaurant deprive the site of its romantic charms. Nursery-maids with children throng the beach during the morning hours before the trade wind begins to blow. No doubt the ocean is roaring as it always did, but the roaring is that of a lion shut up in a menagerie. And yet how can we bear a grudge against civilisation which has covered this desert with gardens and plantations, which has lined the road, to the length of seven miles, with handsome country houses, and created an enormous park, that, in a few years, when the trees have grown up, will be one of the wonders of America ? These curious beasts, the seals, or sea-calves, tawny on shore and black in the water, have not changed. They fight among themselves, clamber up the cliffs, glide about in the sea, and bark just as they always did. But they seem to be doing all this for the gallery. These good seals, and the birds which still keep guard on the tops of the rocks, no longer impress me as deeply as they did thirteen years ago.

Farther north, at the very entrance of the bay, stands the ' reserve' of the Presidio. This piece of land, occupied of yore by an encampment of Spaniards, still serves its original purpose. It is the property of the United States, who have had a fort and barracks built there. All around it are little creeks and nooks, which would tempt bathers, if there were any. But the water is ice-cold along all this coast of the Pacific, though it is about the thirty-seventh degree of latitude, that of Lisbon. But there is no Gulf Stream of Mexico to warm this sea. The great current of warm water which Japan sends to the American continent, touches it farther north, at a considerable distance from San Francisco.

On Sundays the inhabitants of Frisco are fond of taking their glass of beer or wine at the public restaurants in the suburbs. I suppose it is from the Germans that they have acquired this taste, which nature has denied to the Anglo-Saxon. On one of the cliffs which run sheer down into the Golden Horn, a castle has been built in the Elizabethan style, which attracts the attention of the passengers arriving from the sea. They take it for a fort, but it is a beer-garden, where a beverage is served purporting to come from Vienna or Pilsen. You are hoisted up thither in a cable tramway on an almost perpendicular ascent. I did not step inside, but through some doors and windows I was able to see a large hall filled with men, women, children, and babies, and with clouds of tobacco smoke.

The view from this height is one of the most fantastic that can be imagined. The eye plunges down into the Golden Horn, and, southward, into the bay of Santa Clara. On the other side stretches the city, a shapeless mass, a sort of tempest-tost but petrified ocean ; buildings running up hill and down dale, here in full sunshine, there plunged in deep shadow by big patches of fog coming and going at the will of a furious gale which appears to me a hurricane, whereas it is only the usual wind of the afternoon.

To my great surprise, I met Chinamen at every street-corner. It seems that the law, which, for ten years, has shut California against the children of the Middle Empire, has not suc-

ceeded in effecting any marked diminution of their numbers. The truth, I am told, is that the Californians cannot do without people who do the same work as others at half the price.

The fortnight spent at San Francisco was particularly pleasant to me. I saw numbers of people and many old acquaintances. I heard the same symphonies of Beethoven played in the same German house where I was made so welcome thirteen years ago ; only the players, then mere children, were now young ladies ; and I was also able to glean much interesting information.

A great change has come over American opinion in regard to European immigrants. The Americans no longer desire them. I will not re-echo the complaints made against the Irish and the Germans ; very likely there is jealousy at the bottom of this change of opinion. I will only say that the mass of immigrants are accused of being restless and Socialists. People tell me that this growing aversion to Europeans is gaining ground more or less in all the States, and that before long emigrants will find it more profitable to turn to other quarters of the globe.

Here the popular element forms the majority, which is accounted for by the numerical preponderance of the Irish. San Francisco, though one of the largest commercial cities of America, is little by little ceasing to be the residence of the wealthy and well-to-do. People come hither to make money, but, that object once attained, they hasten back to the Eastern States or to Europe.

Until recent years this city enjoyed the monopoly of the transit of goods and provisions intended for the trans-Pacific countries and the western coast of the American continent. This advantage it will henceforth have to share with Los Angeles and Portland, in proportion as traffic increases on the two trans-continental railways, those of the North and the South. The Canadian Railway also will become a formidable rival. Nothing in the world is unchanging ; only in the New World the changes come more rapidly than elsewhere. They live at a great pace there.

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### Across The Continent.

July 28 to August 20.

The voyage—The Columbia river—Astoria—A female telegraph clerk—Interviews—Portland—The Rocky Mountains—The sources of the Missouri—The Mississippi—Niagara—Canada—The towns—The St. Lawrence—The trans-continental railway—Boston—New York—Newport—A narrow escape.

THE communication between the capitals of California and Oregon is maintained by a service of large and well-appointed ships. The distance between San Francisco and Portland is 680 miles, and the passage, said to be dangerous on account of the fogs which are prevalent along the coast, is generally made in three days.

The arrangements on board the ‘ Oregon ’ are excellent. Captain Polemann, a German, is one of the seven survivors of the wreck of the ‘ Schiller.’ Among the passengers are many Germans (you meet them everywhere) and a detachment of troops from the United States. The officers, several of whom are accompanied by their wives, are remarkable for their thoroughly gentlemanlike manners.

The sea is rough, the sky grey and clear. After having crossed the bar of the Golden Horn

and coasted for some hours along the cliffs, the steamer stands out to sea for better safety. The farther north we go, the cooler becomes the temperature and the more bracing the air. This morning I paced the deck for four hours without interruption and without the slightest fatigue. In Ceylon, a quarter of an hour's exercise under the cocoa-nut palms quite exhausted me.

The third day at dawn the 'Oregon' crossed without difficulty the formidable bar of the Columbia. By six o'clock in the morning she came alongside the wharf at Astoria. This is a town of woodcutters, but, small as it is, it is not without its charms. Everything—houses, pavements, little bridges, footpaths—is made of pine wood. The pleasant fragrance of the forest pervades this snug little place ; and, indeed, the forest is everywhere. You see nothing else. Before us lies the majestic river, the river of the future, which will be one of the great arteries of the world's commerce. Beyond are black lines formed by American pines, with their tall, slender stems and stunted branches, somewhat resembling broomsticks. In itself, this tree is not beautiful : it is like the shock head of the schoolboy on which the comb makes no impression. In this country, everything is redolent of youth.

Oregon, though so northerly in its position—Portland is situated on the forty-sixth degree of latitude—enjoys a comparatively mild climate. It owes this advantage, not shared by San Francisco, to the great current of Japan, which is, however, of a lower temperature than the Gulf Stream of Mexico. These warm currents, coming from the other side of the Pacific and flowing always in a northerly direction, follow the coasts of Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia, and their beneficent influence is felt even in Alaska.

Rains are frequent in these parts—hence the nickname of 'wet feet' given to the inhabitants. Cold is almost unknown here, while the states of the interior of the American continent, like Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin, have winters as severe as Siberia.

Oregon at the present time is nothing but an immense forest, consisting chiefly of red-wood, a pine which is well adapted to building purposes, and the cedar of Lebanon. There are a few planters and farmers, but the chief industry of the country is lumbering, the wood-cutter's trade. These forests seem to be inexhaustible. It is the same in Washington and British Columbia as in Oregon. Anyone desiring land in these states and territories can obtain 160 acres gratis, on condition that he immediately sets to work upon them and also builds a house or hut. If he continues to fulfil these conditions for five consecutive years, the land becomes his own property, and he acquires the right to another grant on the same terms. A sober and industrious man is sure to make his fortune. The number of Indians is considerable. They inhabit several fine 'reserves,' and are beginning to clear the land and cultivate the soil. Many Redskins, however, prefer the nomadic life of their ancestors. These are marauders who prowl round the dwellings of the whites, and are adepts in the art of cattle-lifting.

During the voyage I made friends with a lumberer. He showed me over Astoria and talked freely about the state of things in this remote corner of the globe. 'The good Indian,' he told me, 'is the dead one. You can neither make servants nor workmen of these people. Happily they are disappearing, dying out.' Several fellow-workmen of my new friend, who joined our company, confirmed these words and expressed an earnest desire for the prompt extinction of the red race. There is no immediate likelihood of this, however, in the opinion of an officer of the United States army, who spends his life in the 'reserves.' 'Putting aside the Apaches,' he said to me, 'and some other Southern tribes in Arizona and New Mexico, the Indian question may be looked upon as solved. There may still be small risings, but the Indians will never go in large numbers on the war-path. They recognise now our superiority. As long as the Government will give them enough to eat,' or, as he said irreverently, 'will fill their bellies,

they will not stir. They will die of consumption, but they have plenty of children, and the time when they will have disappeared altogether is perhaps farther off than we think.'

I tell my woodcutter friends that if they go on clearing the country as they are doing, there will soon be no trees to cut down, and that consequently the woodcutters will disappear like the Indians. But they assure me that is impossible. 'While we and our children and grandchildren are cutting down the trees first in Oregon, then in Washington territory, and finally in British Columbia, a new forest will have sprung up behind us, and we shall begin the work again.'

Enclosed by low wooded hills, the Columbia river, though very broad near its mouth, appears broader than it really is. There is a calm and grand monotony about the scenery : a dark-green curtain of pines in the background, and along the yellowish and turbid stream overhead, as we are steaming up the river, a pale blue sky. Lights and shades equally pale, coming whence I cannot say, spread alternate brightness and gloom over this vast sheet of water, unenlivened by a single sail or boat. Not a trace of village or houses, only at distant intervals some landing-stages where the wood-cutters ship their timber. The higher you ascend, the lower become the banks, but the forest still continues. Above the tree tops point up the cones of some volcanoes, covered with snow, and just now bathed in sunshine. These are the giants of the north, Mount St. Helen's, Mount Adams, and, the loftiest of the three, Mount Hood. [1]

After six hours' steaming, our boat enters the Willamette, a tributary of the Columbia, and in a short time gains the harbour of Portland, the capital of Oregon.

The more you talk with Americans, the more you learn to appreciate their turn of mind, which is totally different from our own. The difference is accounted for by the peculiar way in which their minds are formed. They begin with practical life and end with theory. We do just the reverse. School prepares us for life ; whereas here life itself is the great school. I am far from saying that the children are not well taught. The contrary I hear confirmed on all sides. But the real, the high school of young Americans, is practice and experience.

At San Francisco I step into the telegraph office. A very well got -up young woman receives my message, reads it and says to me : 'Vienna ? Vienna ? where is that place ?' Though deeply humiliated and mortified as a Viennese, I conceal my vexation, and answer that it is the capital of Austria. 'Austria ?' she says, 'where is Austria ?' However, this young woman, whose geographical knowledge I flatter myself I have extended, appears to get on very well, and, judging by my own, the telegrams passing through her hands reach their destinations. In Europe, the clerks in this branch of the public service begin by learning geography and then enter the telegraph office. Here it is the reverse, and America is quite content to have it so.

Here is another example. In a large town, a very young man, without being announced, makes his way into my room. He introduces himself as one of the editors of a leading newspaper, and requests me to grant him an interview, that he may ask me a few questions. Here are some of them—I quote them literally. 'What are the laws of succession in the Duchy of Brunswick ? How long has Brunswick formed part of the German *Kingdom* ? What are the relations of the German princes to one another ? What were they before the formation of the new Empire ? Will you also give me some precise information about the Pope, his merits and defects, and about all the cardinals and other members of the *Council* ? What do you think of the Emperor Napoleon III. ? How, in your opinion, ought he to have governed France ? and what were the errors committed by his generals in the war with the Germans ? Tell me also some stories of his private life ; and some anecdotes ; in fact, the secret history of the

Tuileries. Our subscribers are extremely partial to this kind of reading' I stood aghast, amazed, dumbfounded. At last, recovering my speech, I answered him : ' You astonish me less by your extreme want of discretion, which I can understand, than by your ignorance upon matters which you treat of every day in your newspaper. You have, I suppose, never read and never studied anything ?' ' No, sir,' replied my interviewer without betraying the smallest annoyance at the brusque frankness of my reply ; ' no, at least not much. How could I read, since I spend my time in writing ? It is not from books that we journalists gather our information, but from conversation with people who know what we do not.' This is nearly the same answer that was given me two years ago by a young and talented journalist in one of the large capitals of South America.

' Have you studied at the university ?' I asked this caballero. ' No, sir. The university is the resort only of those who look to being lawyers. It is not worth while for the rest of us to go there. We belong to a new country. We have to get men ready made. We begin public life very young. The editor of our paper is only twenty-eight years old ; he is the oldest ; I am only twenty-four ; and our colleagues are still younger. In our capacity as journalists we have to learn something about all sorts of subjects, for we are called upon every day to form an opinion upon everything and everybody, *todo y todos*. You will understand that we have no time to study at a university.'

Portland with its 35,000 inhabitants, the metropolis of the North West-Pacific, is a very pretty little town and the centre of great commercial activity. A Polish Jew from Königsberg in Prussia, who has kept a shop here for a quarter of a century, in other words since the first existence of the town, took me into his confidence. ' The great merchants,' he said, ' do not allow the smaller ones to rise. And then the Chinese, those terrible Chinese ! It is no use making them pay dear for their footing ; they always drive an excellent business. They can beat us.'

The Celestials, less persecuted here than in California, form an important element of the population. They build their own houses, generally of brick ; and though ' Second Avenue' is considered the quarter reserved for the Chinese, their houses are also found, next to those of the whites, in other parts of the town. Their shops are very fine, and they pride themselves, not without reason, on their pagoda, which I am told is most magnificent. In one of the shops is seen every kind of industrial product and commodity imported from China. The Chinese chemist dispenses only such drugs as are vouched for by the prescription of a Chinese doctor.

The streets are straight and full of life, and some of them extend to the very verge of the forest. From the balcony of my excellent hotel, Esmond House, I am able to admire the snow-capped peak of Mount Hood.

The next day at noon I left Portland by the new North Pacific line, which was opened less than a year ago. The owner, one of the great railway kings, has become bankrupt, but his work remains. The two termini are Portland (Oregon) and St. Paul (Minnesota) ; the length of the railway is 1,911 miles.

I have treated myself to a state room, and I congratulate myself on having done so. It is like a beautiful roomy cabin on board a big steamer ; with this difference, that there is neither rolling nor pitching, and little if any jolting. Except at certain critical moments, the carriages glide along the rails like a sledge on the snow. If the solitude of my compartment becomes irksome, I take a walk about the train, going from one carriage to another, and studying the faces of my travelling companions, although they look rather commonplace. There is not a rowdy in the train ; no people armed to the teeth ; nothing to cause the slightest misgiving. This was not the case thirteen years ago, when I crossed the continent upon the Central Rail-

way. But even the New World is becoming old and prosaic, and we must resign ourselves to the fact.

The dining cars, in which excellent meals are served, are attached to the train in the morning, and taken off at night, an economical and practical arrangement, except in case of an accident, when famine would take the place of plenty. But considering that one has to travel through countries in great part waste and uncivilised, devoid of white men and inhabited only by redskins, it must be allowed that these arrangements are marvellous.

We have left the smiling banks of the Willamette, and are once again on those of the Columbia. The praises of this river have been sung by the Company's newspapers in every key. But without any exaggeration the scenery stretching far away on either side of the train is very fine. There are pretty little waterfalls, which you would consider charming if the 'penny-a-line' descriptions of them had not led you to expect Niagaras. But the river is magnificent, and cannot be too highly extolled. Small basaltic columns shaped like needles, crowned with isolated pines and rising perpendicularly out of the water, break the monotony of the two banks, which are simply low hills covered with forests. Moreover, the peculiar construction of the line allows you no time for becoming bored. The motion of the cars, as I have mentioned, is very soft except on crossing bridges that span the tributaries of the river, and viaducts—all made of a wooden scaffolding called trestlework—when one is tossed about as in a boat on a rough sea. Accustomed as I am to the boldness of engineers in the New Worlds, more than once both yesterday and to-day I felt my hair stand on end. I imagine that the piercing shrieks that reached my ears expressed the feelings of the ladies in the saloon car next to my compartment.

Gradually the country changes its character. When bathed in the magic tints of the setting sun, it reminds you of the backgrounds of pre-Raphaelite pictures. The Holy Family alone is wanting.

For the following days we have nothing but prairie and forest, forest and prairie, in turns. The train runs on through silent and solitary regions without ever hurrying, but also without stopping more than is necessary. We see magnificent rivers rushing towards us, now hollowing out their bed in the sand and rock, now forcing a passage through the virgin forest, and at long intervals some lumberers' huts, an isolated sawmill, or some groups of wigwams full of ragged Indian women. And then again no trace of human beings.

We crossed on the railway the large lake of Pend Oreille, climbed the first slopes of the ascent, and during a bitterly cold night reached the high table-land of the Rocky Mountains. The sunrise greets us on emerging from Mullan tunnel near the watershed between the two oceans.

The train stops at Helena, Helen of Troy, for such is the name given by the miners to this town, which is the great centre of the gold district, and the capital of Montana. Every creed has its church there, and the Germans are sufficiently numerous to have been able to form *Gesang-* and *Turn-Vereine*.

Few trees, and on the west of the plain some small snow-covered hills, are to be seen, but these small hills are in reality the highest peaks of this part of the Rocky Mountains. The fact is that we have crossed the backbone of the continent without being aware of it. Nothing reminds us here of Alpine scenery except the bracing but icy air we breathe.

At nine o'clock we reach the banks of the Missouri, which is still quite in its infancy. At Gallatin station the line passes near the cradle of this river. A jumbled mass of low hills and



isolated hillocks almost destitute of vegetation indicate its sources, or rather the spot where the Gallatin, Madison, and Jefferson form by their union one of the largest arteries of North America.

Soon afterwards the railway enters the valley of the Yellowstone river. We follow its course all night. Even a splendid moonlight fails to break the monotony of the landscape.

The morning finds us in a flat country entirely devoid of foliage except a few cotton trees. The Yellowstone river has disappeared.

The train enters the prairies of Dacota, crosses the ' Little' Missouri, passes several towns consisting of wooden and canvas huts, all dating from 1882, and stops at the station of Mandan, the principal town on the North Pacific Railway. We are now in the country of the Sioux, and at a shop here travellers are offered articles of native manufacture.

We have rejoined the Missouri. Only a few hours ago we left it a child, now we see it again a young man, and, to drop metaphors, actually navigable for ships of several hundred tons.

At sunrise we are in Minnesota, in the centre of one of the large granaries of the world. Soon afterwards the train reaches the banks of the Mississippi. Right and left, and all around us as far as the eye can see, are cultivated fields, villages, and small market towns. To return to civilised life, after a thousand miles of solitude, is a very pleasant feeling.

At midday on the 30th, four days and four nights after leaving Portland, the train enters the railway station of St. Paul, the terminus of the North Pacific Railway.

This journey is made in the most comfortable manner possible, but in point of picturesque scenery I prefer the Central Pacific Railway.

We have turned our backs on new and little-known lands. I see again with rapture the Mississippi, that enormous river, or rather lake, stretching between two green lines from one horizon to the other. I pass through the German town of Milwaukee, and stop at Chicago, which has risen from its ashes greater and richer than before its destruction by fire, but still essentially a business city. Again I see with delight Niagara, though looking somewhat older, for the bed of the river is lower and the sight of the American Falls is less thrilling than before. But there is still the same abundance of water and the same music of the waves, which is not the least of the charms of that favoured spot.

Then follows a short trip through a country which is the most peaceful, at least in appearance, and the most charming, though, save for the rapids of the St. Lawrence, the least sensational I have ever seen. I am now in Canada. First comes Lake Ontario, whose flat shores scarcely rise above the horizon. Then the St. Lawrence with its ' Thousand islands.' They transport you in fancy to the lakes of Sweden ; you see here the same little rocks, the backgrounds of fir-trees, and the villas and pleasure cottages of painted wood. And then all these towns : Toronto, Montreal, and Quebec—Toronto, with its thoroughly English aspect ; Montreal, with its upper town rich in churches and trees, and its lower town, still French, where above the shop-fronts you read names that were common in the time of Louis XIV. but have now become rare ; and, lastly, Quebec, the city of glorious memories, the military city *par excellence*, whose castle commands the river, which is here truly magnificent.

The remarkable feature of all these towns, besides the French appearance of many of their

inhabitants, is the general air of prosperity, security, and repose. There is business and animation, but not too much of it. There is no racing against time to make one's fortune. In this respect the contrast with the American cities is striking. What a blessing not to be obliged to 'go ahead' ! How the Yankees would beat us, if we were to become American ! So let us remain as we are. That is what everyone says to me, French as well as English Canadians. Their loyalty is based on interest, and is consequently firm and genuine.

During my short stays at Toronto, Prescott, Montreal, and Quebec, I made some most agreeable acquaintances. At Quebec I had the good fortune to meet the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, with his family, then on a tour. What a pleasant life is that of the representative of an adored Queen, living in a rarely ruffled atmosphere of attachment and loyalty, in a country where sledging parties by torchlight shorten the long winter evenings, between two green lines from one other....In the upper classes social intercourse between the English and French is not closely maintained ; but that does not prevent them from being mutually on good terms. And at all events there is not the shadow of animosity or incompatibility of character between them. They differ in manners and in religion, but they live amicably side by side.

The Canadian Pacific Railway is to be opened in May 1886. Its object, I was told by a member of the Cabinet, is political, namely to impress on the white population of the Pacific slope and on the few whites who are scattered over the immense territory of the North-West, that they belong to us, and that we form a great united body ; and in the second place to open for commerce the shortest and most direct route between England and China and Japan, since vessels, especially sailing ships from San Francisco and Portland, are obliged to go north in search of favourable winds and currents. And, finally, the railway will facilitate immigration.

But time is passing, and I must hasten to embark at New York.

Boston is an enchanting place. I know no more congenial town between the Rio de la Plata and the St. Lawrence.

Boston, and especially its fashionable quarter, with the public garden in the centre, and the little red brick houses half covered with ivy, relieved by the white stone facings, and with balconies and little balustraded steps leading up to the porch, puts you in mind of certain English towns. The pavement of red brick reflects the blue of the sky. Little belfries of pretty design rise above the houses. There is not much variety in the architecture, but the harmony of colouring lends a charm to it. The lake in the public garden is crowded with boats filled with women and children ; some of them, in the form of enormous swans, are set in motion by concealed machinery. Nothing can be more quaint and less American.

On the other side of the park is the business quarter. A crowd of well-dressed women throng Washington Street, where the best shops are. It is four o'clock, the fashionable hour. Nothing but the fair sex is to be seen, on foot, in omnibuses, and in the tramcars. All these ladies have a remarkably independent air. Independent, but not emancipated. They simply feel and know themselves to be the masterpieces of creation.

There are a number of libraries. Altogether, this Athens of America bears the stamp of refinement of manners and culture of mind.

New York has grown since my visits there in 1870 and 1871. The number of inhabitants, then a million, has increased at the rate of twenty per cent. But this is the dull season, and although there is animation enough in the business quarters, the drawn blinds of the windows in the fashionable streets show that the masters are away. The *monde élégant* is at Newport,

the *nouveaux riches* at Saratoga or at other watering-places. But only a few have ventured on the voyage to Europe. No 'Europe-going' this year. The cholera is frightening the tourists and emptying the steamers, generally loaded with passengers at this season.

The suspension bridge connecting Brooklyn with New York is a marvel. When crossing it by the railway, you can, if you wish, look through the rails and see the tops of the masts of ships passing below. The cost of this colossal structure, the two supporting piers of which are loftier than the loftiest church spire, was 34,000,000 dollars.

Is it the effect of the excessively dry air, or the over-excitement of the nerves, consequent on this business life—a regular race with time—that gives to the inhabitants this appearance of feverish activity, so striking to the stranger? You would think they have a horror of repose. An American said to me: 'Every one of us wishes to come in first. You walk, and we run, along the road of life. That is why we reach the end of the journey sooner.'

The Austrian Consul, M. Fritsch, takes me to Newport. We embark towards evening on one of the large vessels which ply in summer between New York and this fashionable watering-place. It is a ship of 5,000 tons, with three decks. In the centre is a grand saloon surrounded by three tiers of galleries, giving access to the most comfortable cabins imaginable. Although the ship is crowded, there is no noise. Americans always speak in a low voice. You hear no commands given, and you see neither officers nor sailors; indeed, there are but few of them: the 'Leviathan' appears to move of its own accord. The evening is splendid, and the vast expanse of the Hudson is covered with vessels similar to our own, and laden with excursionists. It is Sunday, and they have taken advantage of the day to breathe on the water a somewhat less burning air than that of the city. They are now returning to the furnace of New York. We pass under Brooklyn bridge. Seen from below, it looks like the fragment of an enormous spider's web, from which the bridge is suspended. The little black flies which seem to be running along it overhead are the railway trains. It is frightful to look up.

At four o'clock in the morning we arrived at Newport.

I am most comfortably settled in a pretty villa, built in the Queen Anne style, tastefully furnished, and with charming inmates. The ladies of the house are wonderfully well acquainted with Europe and European men and things. They speak French very well, and are fond of London, Paris, and Vienna; they have travelled in Italy, and would like to go there again, but this fondness in no way interferes with their intense feelings of patriotism.

Newport is comparatively an old town, situated at the southern extremity of an island in the State of Rhode Island. The houses, for the most part of Queen Anne style, belonging to the wealthy men of New York, extend along the beach. You see pretty gardens, not large but well kept, and fine carriages with coats-of-arms and stylish liveries.

The great man of the day is Mr. Bennett, the proprietor and editor of the 'New York Herald,' which, they tell me, brings in from seven to eight hundred thousand dollars a year. This morning Mr. Bennett has collected the *crème de la crème* of Newport, or rather of New York, on board his yacht, which is a regular frigate. I met here a considerable number of very pretty women with dresses straight from the hands of Worth, and talked with some fashionable young men, remarkable for their unaffected manners and the purity of their English.

This is not to be wondered at. They belong to the best society of their country, and have become polished by contact with the Old World. But even the people one meets in public places and conveyances, and who make no pretension to fashion, have greatly changed in

manners during the last fifteen years. They do not spit, they no longer take delight in impossible attitudes, and they speak less through the nose than formerly. This is especially remarkable in the younger generation.

Besides the breakfast on board, I have been present to-day at a ' polo' match, at a concert, at a dinner, and at an evening party, and it is my own fault that I have not spent the night at a ball.

To-morrow I return to New York.

This is the last time that I am to see the sun rise in America, a brilliant sun such as has smiled upon me uninterruptedly ever since my landing at San Francisco. My trunks are ready, and Checco is about to take them on board the Cunard steamer ' Bothnia,' which will start in two hours' time. On leaving the hotel I find that my note-book, in which I write down my social engagements, visits to be paid, invitations, &c., has disappeared in an unaccountable manner. But I soon forget this little incident. I feel in high spirits, and my heart is full of gratitude to Providence. I have come to the end of my long wanderings safe and sound, and have now only the Atlantic to cross—*yr à la otra banda*— ' to go to the other bank,' as the Spaniards said before the loss of their colonies. To them, as now to me, the Atlantic was a mere brook. In this frame of mind, after changing my greenbacks at the hotel for English banknotes, I went for a stroll in Fifth Avenue. I was stepping out of a shop, when a fashionably dressed gentleman alighted from a carriage and came hastily up to me. ' I see, Baron,' he said in the purest English, that you do not recognise me. I had the honour of being introduced to you at Sydney at a large dinner given by the Governor, Lord Augustus Loftus. I am one of the admirers of your " Promenade autour du Monde," and I venture to ask you to do me the favour of writing your name in my copy of that book. In return, pray accept a volume of Longfellow's poems with the author's autograph. Here followed some excuses on my part, the plea being my departure and the short time now remaining at my disposal ; but on his part fresh entreaties and renewed expressions of kindness. I was pleased with the young man. He talked and looked like an English gentleman, so I ended by yielding, and he made me get into his carriage to be taken back to my hotel, where he also was staying. On the way he suddenly remembered that the two books were at a friend's house, who lived ' two steps' from the hotel. In spite of my objections, he gave some orders to the coachman, who changed his direction, and, as I was pressed for time, drove furiously along the streets. I was much annoyed, for I was afraid of missing my boat ; but—will it be believed ?—no other suspicion crossed my mind. Had I not dined, then, with this gentleman at the house of Lord Augustus ? It is true that I could not recall his face, but I had forgotten other faces before. I know so many people and had made so many new acquaintances during those last fourteen months. The ' two steps' were multiplied, and it was only after a headlong drive of ten minutes that the carriage stopped before a small house of ordinary appearance. Still no shadow of suspicion crossed my mind. After exchanging a few words in an undertone with the coachman, my companion, shutting the door behind us, ushered me into a dark passage, and then into a small and dirty room on the ground floor. Here I found a tall man seated before a little table, with his back to a mirror hung between the two windows. Approaching him, I saw in the mirror that my friend from Sydney turned the key in the lock, drew it gently out and put it into his pocket. Then I understood.

The tall gentleman, who looked like what he was, rose to greet me with a smile which extended his shark-like mouth from one flat ear to the other. He was a regular specimen of a convict : with low but broad forehead and almost bald, while his enormous jet-black moustaches brought into stronger contrast the cadaverous complexion of the face of a gallows-bird ; his hands were large and bony, his fingers covered with rings, and his dress that of a snob.

He spoke to me immediately about the volume of Longfellow. He had not got it at hand, but it would be brought to him in a few minutes. Meanwhile, throwing a piece of oilcloth and cards upon the table, he proposed a game of *Monté*. I politely but firmly declined, and refused to take my seat at the table. 'Very well ; you and I must play alone,' said he, addressing his confederate. 'By the way, you have forgotten to take your yesterday's winnings,' and he handed him a packet of greenbacks with the amount of two hundred dollars printed on the band round them. 'Oh, I didn't think it was as much as that !' And the two men began their game. I then had time to reflect. My first feeling had been that of anger with myself. How, thought I, after having traversed so many seas without meeting with the smallest accident, after having crossed the most unhealthy countries without even catching a cold, could I allow myself to run ashore at the very entrance of the harbour, and to be drawn into the snare like a child ? But this was not the moment to indulge in barren recriminations.

Danger when imminent, be it real or imaginary, either paralyses or excites the faculties. A few moments were sufficient for me to see my way. I was at the mercy of two sharpers, possibly murderers. I had been told only the evening before, that it constantly happens in New York that immigrants, who bring with them a little money, are enticed away and plundered in disreputable places, and that cases of murder are not rare. It was evidently this young man who stole my note-book and made use of it to deceive me. I am not an unknown person here like the poor immigrants, who can be plundered and then without much risk turned adrift, and even then sometimes for greater safety are killed. There is no doubt I have awkward customers to deal with. These two swindlers are clever men. They have chosen the moment for entrapping me remarkably well, as it is the very time for the departure of the steamer which is to take me away. If I disappear from New York, people will merely think that I have left by the 'Bothnia.' Nobody will search for me. Regarded in this light, my situation could hardly be more critical.

But I have two circumstances in my favour. First, these men do not know whether I have enough money about me to make it worth while to risk a crime ; in the second place, they know me, they are aware that I am not an unknown person in New York, and most likely have some acquaintances here. They must also reflect that if, as is almost certain, my absence is discovered on board before the steamer actually leaves, my servant will raise a hue and cry, the captain will set the telegraph at work, and the police will begin a search for me.

It comes to this : if I agree to play I am certain to lose what money I have about me and to miss the boat, for I have only just time left to reach the wharf ; but I am not sure that these men, after having robbed me, will not murder me.

On the other hand, if I refuse to comply with their request, they have but to choose between two expedients : either to let me go unmolested, or to do away with me after having robbed me.

My mind is made up. I will decline to play, and try to intimidate them. If I succeed, I am saved. If not, I shall have done what I could. On this card then, since I am forced to play in this den, I am decided to stake my all.

The croupier again invited me to take a hand, this time in a somewhat imperious tone. I again refused. After a short pause, he said : 'Very well, Baron, since you absolutely refuse, I shall take your place, and my winnings shall be yours.' He and his confederate again began to play. Fortune naturally favoured me. After a few minutes I had won a thousand dollars. The man with the moustaches opened his drawer, took from it five packets each of two hundred dollars, and handed them to me across the table. I threw them back to him again.

But it was necessary to put an end to this. Speaking very slowly, without betraying any emotion, and accentuating each word, I said to him : ‘ Come now, I have told you that I never play ; that ought to satisfy you. Moreover, if I would I could not, having no money with me. You would get nothing for your trouble. You know that my servant is gone on board the “ Bothnia ” with my luggage. You possibly do not know that some of my friends have also gone there to bid me good-bye, and that among those friends are the Minister at Washington, who is staying at New York, and the Consul of my own nation. If they don’t see me arrive before the steamer leaves, and if they don’t find me at the hotel, they will give the alarm and set on foot a search that you may perhaps deem it prudent to avoid.’ Then, turning to my friend from Sydney, I said to him : ‘ Open the door.’

During all this time I had stood upright near the latter, who was still seated opposite to the croupier. There was a pause. The two men exchanged looks : it was a consultation. At the same time it was the crisis, and for me, I confess, it was a disagreeable moment. The young man kept his head bent over the table, and I noticed that his habitual smile had given place to a very evil expression. The croupier maintained his cold and scowling manner. No more shark’s smiles. At the end of a minute or two, he slowly rose, and, bending towards the other sharper, said to him in a low voice : ‘ Show him out.’ The latter rose and opened the door for me, saying : ‘ I locked it as a measure of precaution against intruders.’ I could have replied that that was no reason for putting the key into his pocket, but I had no desire to prolong the interview. In a few seconds I was in the outer air. The carriage had disappeared. I was in too great a hurry to get on board the steamer to be able to take down the name of the street and the quarter. Moreover, what would be gained by it ? There was nothing to found an accusation upon. These gentlemen offered me a present, then invited me to play at cards, and when they saw that I was not disposed to play, they accompanied me to the door. No one could be more polite. However, when I stepped upon the deck of the ‘ Bothnia,’ a few minutes before departure, I felt that I had had a narrow escape.

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### The Return.

August 20 to 29.

From New York to Queenstown—Lord Amphill—End of the voyage.

This fine large steamer is almost empty. She has the honour, however, of carrying a high official, the Resident Minister and Consul of the United States in Liberia. Liberia, as we know, is a small republic on the coast of Africa, near Sierra Leone, founded before the War of Secession by some emancipated slaves, whom the Southern States were anxious to get rid of. This diplomatist, whom Nature has created black, is the type of an English ‘ swell.’ He speaks without the least American accent, and dresses with the most scrupulous care and in excellent taste. Stretched on his arm-chair with a novel in his hand, he is the image of a statesman on a holiday, who divides his time between light reading and deep meditation. He has spent six years in Liberia, finds the climate healthy, and considers the young Republic, whose constitution is copied from that of the United States, more and more flourishing.

The two or three other passengers are Americans. One of them, who seems to be a pessimist by nature, observes to me : ‘ In the States we are nothing but a mass of atoms, or, if you like, of individuals who are all running in the same direction, but without any bond of union between them, unless it be an unbridled desire to make money. We don’t clash with one another, because we have still space enough left ; it was formerly unlimited, but is already beginning to grow narrower. That explains why we don’t wish for more immigrants. When

space fails, there will be a war of all against all—*bellum omnium contra omnes*.' This, as I have said, is the language of a pessimist ; but what strikes me as a novelty since my last visit, is the dislike of new immigrants from Europe. The golden age of immigration appears to be over.

The weather is splendid, and the ' Bothnia,' like all the vessels of this famous company, follows the southern course. Northward, we see black strips of fog, but except some thick vapours which we pass through with the fog-horn blowing, our steamer avoids the region of ice and darkness.

At length, on August 29, 1884, at noon, Fastnet Rock appears in sight. At six o'clock in the evening, the steamer Hes to at the entrance of Cork Harbour, and a tender conveys us to Queenstown.

It is with lively pleasure that I again set foot on European soil. At the hotel I am given the London papers, just arrived by the mail. An announcement in large type catches my eye at once : ' Funeral of Lord Amphill.' I feel completely stunned. I try to persuade myself that it is a dream ; but, alas ! it is too true. Death has stricken down the English Ambassador at Berlin, in the midst of his labours, in the prime of age, in the fullness of his strength.

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita,

he has been snatched away from his country, his family, and his friends.

*August 30.*—I left the railway at Ennis, and am now driving to the cliffs of Miltown Harbour. It is almost dark. The sky is grey ; and the evening breeze sighs through the foliage of the last trees along the road leading to the sea. My coachman pulls up short. A gentleman and two young ladies alight from a carriage which has come to meet me....A sweet and happy moment ! the last of my travels ' Through the British Empire.'

[1] These mountains are respectively 9,000, 11,000, and 18,000 feet above the level of the sea.

Through the British empire (1886)

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