JOSEPH WARDLE

FROM THE THAMES TO THE TIBER

Joseph Wardle
From the Thames to the Tiber

http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=34337258
From the Thames to the Tiber / or, My visit to Paris, Rome, Florence, Venice, Milan, Switzerland, etc.:

Содержание

Joseph Wardle
From the Thames to the Tiber / or, My visit to Paris, Rome, Florence, Venice, Milan, Switzerland, etc

"Go, little book, God send the good passage,
And specially let this be thy prayer:
Unto them all that thee will read or hear,
Where thou art wrong, after their help to call,
Thee to correct in any part or all."

—CHAUCER.

CHAPTER I

London: Its teeming millions of population: Its commercial aspect: Leaving Victoria Station for New Haven: On the Boat: New found friends: Landing at Dieppe: Leaving for Paris: Rouen, its Cathedral, etc.

We had settled to have a holiday—not a mere pic-nic, not a week-end at Blackpool, or a tour of a few days in the Isle of Man—but a real first-class, out-and-out trip. Where then is it to be? Why, to Rome and back, came the reply. From St. Paul's in London, the largest city in the world, to St. Peter's in Rome, one of the great cities of the ancient world.

"To Rome!" my friends said in astonishment.

"Yes! to Rome." There seems to be magic in the very word. Rome—The Eternal City. The city of the seven hills. The city of which St. Paul was proud to be a citizen. See Acts, chapter 22, verse 25. "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, uncondemned?" verse 28. "Then the Chief Captain came and said unto him. Tell me, art thou a Roman?" He said, "Yes."

Rome stands for power. Her proud eagles once swept their wings over almost the then known world. Rome stands for antiquity, greatness, wealth, splendour, conquest and colonization, liberty, law, self control, prowess, skill. But, alas! It also stands for cruelty, luxury, strife, war, humiliation, decay,

decline.

This is the objective really of our holiday. Now it is settled, ways and means, and the route, etc., are but details. Packing! Well, I am a poor hand at packing. I think it must be a gift to be able to pack well. I think a good packer must be born, not made. If I pack, sure as fate, the things I want first are at the bottom of the trunk. My dear little wife, to whom I owe much for packing and general comfort during the tour, and, indeed, I owe to her well-kept journal, much that assists me to make this record of our holiday.

On the 25th September, 1907, we found ourselves en route for London, followed by the good wishes and prayers of loved ones left behind, also of the many friends we knew had kind thoughts of us. We reached London about 6 p.m., and were soon snug and comfortable in "The Manchester Hotel." We had no time and no special wish just now to see London. London cannot be seen in a day or two. Its magnitude bewilders, having a population of about 7,000,000, and for its teeming millions, there is need of bread, milk, beef, clothes, work, etc. We cannot understand at a glance what it means. In London we have the largest breweries, distilleries, and sugar refineries in the Kingdom; also many metal manufacturers and machine makers, including: plate, jewellery, watches, brass works, and all kinds of tin and zinc works; large printing and publishing houses; also, as you know, large millinery and tailoring establishments; cabinet-making on a most extensive scale, leather-working, coopering,

coach-building, ship-building, hat-making, extensive chemical works, soap manufacturing and dye works; also dock labourers, 'bus drivers, cab drivers, tram guards and drivers, railway men and engine drivers, policemen, postmen, ministers of religion, there being over 3,000 churches in this great city, and many other means of living besides the few I have mentioned. Then there are its hotels, as "The Manchester Hotel" where we are staying, "The Midland Grand," "Grand Hotel," Trafalgar Square, "The Victoria Hotel" in Northumberland Avenue. Many more offering accommodation to the tens of thousands of visitors to this great city from all lands. We cannot refrain from mentioning the religious aspect of the city. We have our noble Cathedral, St. Paul's, always worth a visit, if only for its monuments and torn banners, and its choral service; then we have "Spurgeon's Tabernacle"; "The City Temple," where once ministered that mighty man of God, Dr. J. Parker; also Wesley's Church; City Road West London Mission, and many others I cannot describe.

Its theatres on all hands, who claim their votaries by tens of thousands nightly. The underground electric railways give to the city traveller and visitor an idea of the vastness and importance of the City. However, it was no part of my intention when I began this record to describe London, so I will content myself with saying we only spent one night in the city on our outward journey.

Many of my readers will be quite familiar with the streets, shops, bazaars and churches of this great hive of human life,

human industry, and human skill. A good night's rest and we rose refreshed for our journey, now it is to Paris. We had very little difficulty in re-packing our valise and trunk, settling our account and calling to our rescue a porter. We were soon in train at Snow Hill for Victoria, arriving at this latter place in time to catch "The Continental" for New Haven and Dieppe.

It is not an easy matter even with a porter to guide you, to find out amidst such a labyrinth of platforms and stair-cases to find the train you want, and to get a comfortable seat. We managed, however, ultimately to reach the right platform and to find a seat in a comfortable compartment. We noticed our fellow passengers, by label on their luggage, were also going to foreign fields and to Continental cities. The morning was a lovely autumn morning. As we steamed out of Victoria Station we got a sight of the lovely landscape, the morning sun was shining in great brilliance. We passed villages of importance, and towns in rapid succession. Lewes was a stopping place not far from New Haven. We did not stay long at this station, just long enough for the railway officials to satisfy themselves we were all furnished with tickets for the Continent. After leaving Lewes, we were in New Haven in about half-an-hour.

New Haven is about 56 miles from London. A pretty place, lying at the foot of the white chalk cliffs. It has a population of about 3,000. It is, however, an important place, as the mail packets for the cities of Europe leave here twice daily. Our train ran us very close up to the landing stage, and the securing

our luggage and getting it conveyed from train to steamer was only the work of about ten minutes, and was managed without the least difficulty. The weather continued all we could desire, and it seemed quite clear we were going to have a calm sea and a pleasant voyage across channel. We got very nice seats on the boat; we found our fellow-passengers on the whole most agreeable, polite, and, indeed, friendly; were we not all on pleasure bent, and should we not now, on the wide ocean, show to others respect. We strolled the deck of our pretty little vessel, she was a beauty, and behaved so well, we had not the least fear of that terrible disease that afflicts so many who sail the seas, I mean what the French call mal-de-mer—"the sickness of the sea." We had hardly lost sight of the white cliffs of dear, old England, when our thoughts went back to home, and to loved ones. Then we began to think of refreshments. We found a menu that filled us with hopefulness that an agreeable meal at least might be obtained. We went to the buffet and found we could get a real good English dinner. This we had and enjoyed it heartily; I considered it excellent, and my wife, who is a connoisseur in the cookery line, declared she was well satisfied.

A newly-married couple joined us. We found they were on their honeymoon. A very happy couple apparently. In our hearts we wished that their lives might be as smooth as the sea we were now crossing. We became quite friends before we got half way across the channel. I had my Kodak with me, so I must take a snap-shot or two of the happy pair; then I and my wife must

submit to the same process. So the time passed pleasantly, and in about three hours we were landing on the shores of France at Dieppe.

Our little ship, as if in a hurry to serve us, was quickly up at the landing stage, and we were safe on shore with our baggage, en route for the Custom House. We soon found out we were in a foreign land, because a foreign tongue was spoken, and although I am able to parley vous un peu, I could not hold conversation with a Frenchman, he speaks so quickly. I, however, could ask a simple question in French and also give a simple answer to a question, and this was of immense value to me during this tour. Our trunks duly examined, and free, we had a short time to look round Dieppe.

On our strolling about a little, waiting for our train, we saw a little of this rather important French town and watering place. It has a population of about 20,000; it lies in a hollow so to speak; the white chalk hills surround it; the quays are substantially built of solid masonry. Dieppe seems to have an old castle, quite out-of-date, as a defence; there is also a citadel of modern construction; a small light-house, about 40-feet high, stands by the entrance of the town. We learned that a large number of French people come to Dieppe for the summer and autumn holidays. There are some works for the labouring classes, such as: ivory works, one of the most famous in Europe; also there are some works in horn, in bone, some in lace, some sugar refineries, a little ship-building, and the fishing industry is fairly

prominent; a good supply of herring and mackerel is sent daily to Paris; also there are extensive oyster beds, which are a source of profit to the inhabitants. We boarded the train about 4 o'clock p.m., and leaving Dieppe and the sea behind us, we steamed away at a rapid rate towards Paris. We passed some lovely country, rich in fruit and foliage; some most beautiful Chalets, with grounds like fairyland; also, we saw the working-class home, apparently very poor, no windows and little furniture; they seem to live out of doors, and eat very much fruit and vegetables; they appear, however, healthy and strong. We saw some one or two cemeteries, and so near we could see very strange archways of flowers or wood, or marble over the graves, and very large crucifix's.

We had left our new found friends at Dieppe, so now we were more alone to enjoy each others company, and to speak of the scenery and places as we passed them. In about an hour-and-an-half we reached Rouen. A very large and important railway station. Here we stayed a little while, and we could see the town was large and important. It was formerly the capital of the province of Normandy. It is one of the best commercial centres in France. It has been called the Manchester of France on account of its great cotton manufactories, producing goods to the value of 80,000,000 francs annually. It has also manufactories of hosiery, silk and wool fabrics, hardware and machinery. It is an important sea-port, as it has a harbour that can receive steamers of 600 tons. It has a population of about 150,000. The Cathedral

of Notre Dame, built between 1207 and 1210, is a fine Gothic building. The spire is nearly 500 feet high. In this old Cathedral rests the remains of Rollo, first Duke of Normandy, and his son William.

M. B. Edwards, in a poem, says of this old-world Cathedral:—

"The isles grow dim, and as by winding ways,
Eager I climb St. Onen's giddy height,
The silver censers vanish from my gaze
As shooting stars upon a dusky night
I hear the chanting vespers at my feet
Like wordless water, music fair and sweet.

"On priest and acolyte and people falls,
From western window many a sapphire ray;
The sculptured knights within the niched walls
Look not more mute and marble-like than they,
Living and dead with fingers clasped seem praying
God and the angels hear what they are saying.

"The city gleams with lights that come and go,
The hills are cut against the opal west;
The river hath a soft and onward flow
As some tired spirit fain to seek its rest,
While from the far outlying mists of green
Tinkle some vesper bells of Church unseen.

"Monk, Martyr, Saint, and paladin arise

Around me now in pinnacled array;
An hour ago they seemed to touch the skies,
At last I stand as near to heaven as they,
And at last 'mid this mute companionship of stone
I cannot feel that I am quite alone."

CHAPTER II

Arrival in Paris: Our Hotel—"Hotel Londres and New York": Visit to the Louvre: The Cathedral of Notre Dame: The Church of St. Geniveve: The Pantheon: Bloody Bartholomew: Its awful massacre.

Our stay in Rouen was of the briefest, so we were soon full steam ahead for Paris, and Rouen was left behind. We crossed some wonderful bridges of the rivers, or river; I think we crossed the Seine several times.

On approaching the suburbs of Paris, we saw large villas and larger mansions, surrounded with luxuriant foliage; indeed, the whole landscape is charming. Soon we found the train rattling over points and crossings, and into Gare de Lazare. So we are in Paris; the city of gaiety, the city of beauty, the goal of pleasure seekers from all parts of the world; a city, it is said by Victor Hugo, combines in itself—Athens, Rome, Jerusalem—such is the city we have just entered, and which is to be our home for two or three days. The distance from the station to our Hotel—"Hotel Londres and New York," 15, Place du Havre, is so short that our luggage was conveyed by porter, without a cab; we just walked across the square, and we were in the Hotel. I had, however, a difficulty on hand with the porter. My idea of remuneration for porter's services were by no means up-to-date for Paris; I thought

a franc for ten minutes' service ample. He, evidently, did not think so, as he showed himself highly dissatisfied, and expressed himself in language (happily I understood but little of) anything but polite. I told the Hotel Manager how I had acted, and he went and sent him away.

When in Paris, if you are in doubt as to your exact position, and want direction (in England you would say, "ask a policeman"), in France—pardon, monsieur, Quel est le chemin pour le madoline. If you put on side, he won't notice you; if you offer him a tip, he will probably take you for a spy, and arrest you as an anarchist. The lifting of the hat and the word "monsieur" is an open sesame which appeals to all Frenchmen, and smooths away many difficulties; it transforms the haughty policeman into the politest of bobbies; the frowning hotel-keeper into the most jovial of hosts; and the cross-grained custom house official into a most agreeable acquaintance. You must avoid whistling while in Paris; the Scotchman says, "Ye mauna whustle on the Sabbath"; this saying must be applied to every day of the week in Paris; nothing is so irritating to a Frenchman, except perhaps the sight of a British tourist, arrayed in white flannels, marching in their grand Cathedrals, or even one of their ordinary Churches, with a cigarette in his mouth. The untravelled man soon finds out the difference between an English and a Continental City, and habits of the people.

We were shown to our rooms, which we found clean and comfortable; the Hotel is all we could desire. A porter, at

the entrance, speaks fairly good English. We soon had a good square meal, in the shape of table-de-hote, which we were quite ready for and enjoyed; plenty of fruit on the tables, grapes, oranges, apples and peaches. After satisfying the inner man, we strolled into the lounge or writing-room, which we found most convenient and pleasant—writing material, newspapers and bills of concerts, plays, etc.; also, here I could enjoy my pull at the weed. We were not late in retiring to rest; rest we could, but not sleep for a time; I thought, O! restless Paris! The only time that is quiet from tram, 'bus and cab seems to be from about 1 a.m. to 3 a.m.; after this early hour, wagons begin to lumber past, farmers from the country, I think, with produce which must be in the market early. We slept, however, a few hours, rising fairly early for dejeuner, we were able to enjoy a cup of coffee made in Paris; coffee here is perfect; roll and butter, fish, eggs, etc. Breakfast over we engaged a cab, a taxi-cab, and we drove round some parts of this wonderful city; we went by some parts of the banks of the river Seine, and here there are literally miles of quays, and the river is spanned by fifteen bridges, some of them of great strength and beauty.

The Louvre was one of the places we visited. No one would think of going to Paris without seeing this vast pile of buildings; no less than sixty acres, I learned, in the very heart of the city was taken up by this building. It stands to-day as it has stood for more than an hundred years, with its grand facades, pavillions and colonnades, and its splendid halls, saloons and galleries, as

a proud monument to the ancient Royalty of France. It was the home of Henry III., till civil war drove him from his capital, and he perished at St. Cloud by the assassin's knife. Here for a time Henry of Navarre had his abode. It is now a museum or a series of grand museums; miles of the most wonderful paintings, choice sculptures, Assyrian, Egyptian, Greek and Roman antiquities, bronzes, historic relics from far off lands, and from different races, engravings and models—indeed, it is a great storehouse of art. During the war with Germany, the Communists set fire to one of the wings and the library of 90,000 volumes and many rare manuscripts were destroyed.

It is said that on the night of the 23rd of May, a troop of Germans had entered the city and made their way so far, they ordered the porter or door-keeper of the Louvre to pour petroleum into the different rooms, and on his refusal, they imprisoned him and his wife in his own lodge, and then at once set fire to the place. Next day the French troops arrived in time to release him from his sad plight, and also to arrest the flames in their destructive work.

The Cathedral of Notre Dame, of course, came in for a visit. It stands, we are told, on the site on which the Roman conqerors erected a temple to Jupiter. This Cathedral is a marvel of architectural beauty. As you gaze you wonder at the skill of the architect, and also of sculpture, for there are in marble and stone fanciful scenes from bible history portrayed—the Kings of Judah; a colossal image of the Virgin Mother; Adam and Eve.

There are many pointed arches and stained windows glistening in the sun's rays. Two massive towers rising to the height of 200 feet. The interior is in keeping with the exterior, only, if possible, richer and finer; the length is about 400 feet, and the breadth about 150. It has stood in its beauty on this spot during the last 600 years.

One of the Chapels of this Cathedral contains, they tell us, some wonderful relics. For instance, "a part of the crown of thorns with which our Saviour was crowned in mockery"; also the sponge and winding sheet used at His death. Kings and princes of the Roman Catholic persuasion have vied with each other in the costliness of their offering at this sacred shrine—cups, gold cups, silver cups, vases, candlesticks, crosses in gold and silver, some studded with diamonds, and all kinds of precious stones.

There are curiosities and art treasures in abundance within the precincts of this holy place. It must have been a proud day for Napoleon when he came to be crowned in this great Cathedral, heralded by Popes, Marshalls and sword-bearers. Bearers bore his train amidst the most brilliant assembly of this, or any other land.

Another notable building we visited after the Cathedral of Notre Dame, I think more interesting in its way—what was at one time the Church of St. Geniveve—now it is known as the Pantheon. It stands upon an elevation, and its magnificent dome can be seen from almost all parts of the city. It rises to a height of 267 feet. The funds to build it with, we are told, were

provided by lottery at the time of Louis XV. Its approach is very attractive, being by a stately portico, and by a triumphal progress. The grand car, upon which the Sarcophagus containing the body of Voltaire was laid, was drawn by twelve white horses to the Pantheon. It is said that 100,000 people joined in the procession. Rousseau and Marat were buried with similar honours; but we are told, that so fickle is the populace, that six months after, the body of one of them was removed and buried in a common sewer. Our guide was not shy in showing us the very sad effects of the German shells. The large dome was shot through by their cannon balls, and, but for the timely help of the troops from Versailles, very likely this noble building would have shared the same fate as many others did.

Opposite the grand collonade, near the Louvre, is the Church of St. Germain, with its strange gable, buttresses and gargoyles. From the belfry of this Church, it is said, "rang out the tocsin," which was the signal for the massacre of St. Bartholomew, on the 24th of August, 1572. At the dead of night—fit time for such awful deeds of blood and murder—at the sound of this tocsin the courtly butchers went forth to their work of slaughter, armed and shouting "for God and the King." They forced the dwellings of the Christians. Six thousand of these assassins, wielding the weapons of the brigand and the soldier, ran about in the wildest fury, murdering without mercy or distinction of sex, or suffering, or age. Many of these fiends in human form ran shouting "kill the heretic, kill the heretic! Death to the Huguenots—Kill! Kill!!"

That day the human seemed to be turned into the fiend. It is said there perished in Paris alone, over 15,000 Christian Martyrs, and in the provinces more than as many more. The sun of that beautiful sabbath shone with its pure light upon the desolate and dishonoured homes of the victims of this terrible massacre; and the air, which should have been hushed from sound until the psalm of praise woke it, bore upon its midnight billows the yell of fierce blasphemers flushed and drunk with murder. Says one, "Unhappy, Paris, thou hast suffered many things since that unhappy time."

There are many interesting Churches in this gay city, but I must refrain from dwelling upon their beauty and utility.

CHAPTER III

Paris: Palace de Concorde: Champs Elysees: The Bois de Boulogne: The extensive Boulevards: The River Seine, etc.: Leaving Paris: Arrive at Dijon: Our Hotel: Dijon, its Churches, etc.: Our journey to Chambery, etc.

The Place de la Concorde. Here we were pointed out was a place where a terrible struggle took place between the Germans and the French in 1871. The work of devastation and ruin was only too apparent. We drove to the Champs Elysees. This is a most lovely place, with a broad avenue a mile long, with trees on each side of all sorts, and grass lawns and flower beds in the greatest profusion. Here wander carelessly the gay crowds, or sit in beautiful little cafes under the spreading branches of the trees. In the groves around the children are swarming, shouting, and playing. We noticed there was the ever-loved of children, "The Punch and Judy," also with stalls with toys, gingerbread, etc., etc.

When the darkness gathers and the numerous and brilliant gas jets are lighted, stretching for the distance of more than a mile, and music and song float on the air, the scene is very fascinating. It is said, that along this broad avenue, in 1871, Paris with suppressed rage—watched the last of the German army disappear. Our jarvey then drove us to the Bois de Boulogne, which is not far from here. This is a grand promenade for

chariots and horses, a little like our Rotten Row, in London.

There are here to be seen lakes, islands, caverns, artificial mounds, avenues, and, indeed, everything to make a most charming retreat from the busy city life. The Champ de Mars is another of the open spaces. Napoleon, before the famous battle of Waterloo, held his last review of the grand army of France here. Again, in 1852, 60,000 soldiers were brought together on the occasion of the distribution of eagles to the different regiments, also several Arabs, in native costume, as representative of the vanquished Algerian tribes. And here again, sad to say, in 1871, the Germans levelled their dreadful "mitrailleuse" and shot down, in their helplessness, many of the French. We can hardly leave Paris without saying further that the boulevards of Paris are a great boon and joy to the city.

Whatever may be thought or said of the career of Napoleon III., in fourteen years he spent £60,000,000 in building seventy miles of streets and two hundred boulevards, eight churches, eighty schools, twelve wonderful bridges, and planted fifty thousand trees. All added ultimately to the wealth as well as the attractions of the city. To describe the streets is a task I shall not attempt.

They are called Rue—as Rue Lafitte, Rue de la Chausse, Rue de la Victorie, Rue St. Dennis. The numerous places and things in and around Paris that call for remarks are legion, but I must forbear, only to give one passing reference to the river Seine and its many bridges. Pont Notre Dame or the bridge of Our Lady, dates from the fifteenth century; a bridge of later date, we were

told, was made of wood, and fell into the river taking sixty houses with it. This is a fine bridge built of solid masonry. The Pont d'Arcole is a suspension bridge for foot passengers only. The Pont Neuf was built by Henry IV. There is a bronze horse on the bridge which was cast in Tuscany. On its way to Paris, the vessel bringing it was wrecked off the Norman coast, and lay for a year at the bottom of the sea. It was ultimately fished up and brought to its present position. And now I must leave, for a time at least, any further reference to Paris, only to say we settled our account at the Hotel and drove off to Gare-de-Lyon to catch the train at 10.25 for Dijon. Our driver was a very interesting sort of Frenchman, and tried to explain and show us places and things, but we were little the better for his attempts to enlighten us. We reached the station early, and were soon steaming away through France, and as we did so, we came to the conclusion it was as fair a land as e'er we had set eyes on; miles of lovely lawns; hedges cut and trimmed as if by a barber; the poplar trees rising in rows, long and even, all in order and beauty; then the rivers here and there rolling along, between grassy banks, and the lovely fat looking cattle browsing or sleeping in soft sunshine; cosy cottages, almost buried in bowers of roses; quaint old world villages, with red-tiled cottages; and stately churches with ivy covered towers, made one think of the poet who sang:—

> "Through thy cornfields green and sunny vines,
> O, pleasant land of France."

We had very comfortable seats in the train, and our travelling companions, I think, saw we were foreigners, therefore did not trouble us with any conversation. The country scenery we passed was charming, as the autumn tints were visible upon the trees; also the rich corn harvest was gathered in, and stacks of wheat were plentiful. Labourers we could see in the fields tilling the soil for next year's produce. The country we passed through in our journey from Paris to Dijon (our next stop) is comparatively flat, slightly undulating in places, and I should think the soil is of a rich nature. About 6 o'clock we arrived at Dijon, and soon were out of the train and into the hotel 'bus. We had arranged beforehand our hotel from a list supplied from "Cook & Sons." Here we had chosen the "Grand Hotel de la Cloche," or we should call it the "Bell Hotel." After having secured our apartments—which were of a first-class order, most profusely decorated and richly furnished, and clean beyond description—we had a wash, and found table-de-hote was ready, and we were ready too. A well prepared and well served dinner of eight courses; wines free and abundant to those who cared to have it; indeed, a bottle of the French red wine was placed to each individual at the table; fruit in abundance. A very good company, and apparently very jolly.

All were foreigners, either French, German or Italian. After dessert we went for a little while to the smoke room, and then to bed. We slept well until very early in the morning, when a terrible storm of thunder and lightning broke over the town—it was very

startling, being so severe. We learned, when at breakfast, that a woman had been struck by lightning close by our hotel; she, however, was not killed.

Dijon lies in a valley, the river Onche runs through it, and a beautiful undulating piece of land, covered with vines, lies to the left of the town, which is nearly 200 miles from Paris. It has now, I believe, a population of about 50,000. We took the best means of seeing it in the short time at our disposal, by hiring a car. One of the most jolly-looking Frenchmen I ever saw, with a face as round and red as an apple, his horse was just as fat as a horse could be, and he cared for it as if it was human, or even more than some human beings are cared for. He drove us to some lovely gardens where there was a fine lake and a fountain which was then playing. Having my Kodak with me I took a snap-shot, though I regret to say, I did not get a good picture.

We drove to the lovely Cathedral of St. Boniface, built, we were told, for the third time in the twelfth century. The spire is very fine, rising to a height of 300 feet. We also visited St. Michael's, which is Grecian in its exterior, but it is Gothic in its interior.

We passed a very old Carmelite Church with rich carving about the entrance, and a fine old carved oak door. On the steps sat two old men resting, typical of the labouring class of France. I just managed to get a snap-shot. There is a fine town hall, which shows itself to great advantage. We learnt it was at one time the Palace of the Duke of Burgundy, and had then a very large collection of scientific and art subjects, and a library of 50,000

volumes. Dijon is one of the loveliest towns of France. It has in it some manufacturies as woollen cloth, blankets, glue, baskets, mustard oil, saltpetre, and there is also a brewery. At the time of the Roman invasion, it is said, Cæsar fixed and fortified a camp near here. The Germans attacked it in 1871, and it capitulated on October 23rd of that year, after a long and severe struggle, and was made, for the time being (to the great chagrin of the inhabitants) the head-quarters of the German General Werder.

Having made as full an acquaintance of the place as we could in the short time at our disposal, we paid our hotel account and found ourselves again at the railway station. Here I had a long and angry altercation with the ticket examiner. I understood him to say our tickets were for another route; I closely scanned them, and assured him in the best French at my command, our tickets were in order, and, after considerable difficulty, he consented to our passing the stile and getting, to the train. Again we were on rail, comfortably fixed and destined for Chambery. We had not left Dijon long before we noticed the vine-clad hills, which indicated our approach to the South of France, and Alpine hills.

The scenery grew more beautiful as we sped along towards our destination. We were able not only to enjoy the views as we passed villages and hamlets—but were able to get a fairly good square meal on the train. We arrived safely at Chambery about 5 o'clock, and as usual we had fixed upon an hotel. This time it is Hotel de France, and we were soon in a rumbling old 'bus and driven to a very quiet part of this quiet sleepy little town.

We found it fairly comfortable, and a hostess who had a robust and bonny appearance, and whose welcome in the French fashion was all we could wish. Our rooms were lofty and rather barely furnished. There was a feeling of chilliness about the place, but we were only staying for one night, so would put up with it.

A good hot table-de-hote dinner, and we felt better. To bed at an early hour, was our habit, and here we did not break it.

A good night's rest, and I was stirring early to look round and get information. It is a town of about 13,000 inhabitants. An Archbishop resides here (of the Romish Church) of course. It has some manufacturies in silk gauze, watches, leather, etc. I saw some soldiers on horseback on parade and took a snap-shot. Also two fine bullocks pulling a wagon of timber. We had a very good breakfast, as our hostess was most gracious and obliging. We settled up accounts, which we found on a moderate scale, indeed, cheaper than a similar hotel in England. We started for the station on foot, the morning being fine, while a porter conveyed our luggage on a wheelbarrow. Arriving in good time at the station we managed to get good comfortable corner seats, so we could "view the landscape o'er" at our leisure. We soon found it was worth surveying, for we were nearing the Alps. On our left, some fifty miles or more—Geneva and, between the city and Chambery, lay a rugged mountainous district scarcely matched in any part of the world. For an hour or more we watched the changing scenery with an intense interest.

CHAPTER IV

Our journey to and through Mont Cenis Tunnel: Passing the Customs: Our new friend Nurse Reynolds: Our scrimmage for provisions at Turin: Arrival at Genoa and Table-de-hote: Arrival at Rome and our Hotel, etc.

Mountains, rivers, waterfalls, landscapes, vineyards, castles, chalets, and in some cases, so near the villages, we saw children playing on the village green, our train steaming on at a good speed, we soon found ourselves at Modane. This is the frontier between France and Italy, and here I expected we should have to change trains, go through the Customs, and re-embark on another train. So we got out of the train. I soon found, however, we were not to change, so we re-entered another part of the same train, and here we were civilly and carefully dealt with; the very acme of politeness was shown. Our bags and valises were just opened, but scarcely examined. We declared we had nothing within, to the best of our knowledge and belief, upon which duty was payable. When asked the question, I answered "Non, Monsieur." When we came to settle down before the train proceeded on its journey we noticed our fellow travellers were different. We found two ladies, mother and daughter, going to join a near relative in India; an Italian woman, not over clean, with a babe about four weeks' old; and a nurse in uniform who

was going to Rome to fill a position, also she wanted to learn the Italian language. My dear wife and this nurse soon became close acquaintances, as they both had learned the profession, and for some time they were too absorbed almost to notice the scenery we were passing, for we were now nearing the Alps through which we were to pass. We reached Mont Cenis duly, and, as we heard so much of this terrible tunnel, we almost dreaded passing through it. At this point there is an old pass over Mont Cenis, or roadway between Piedmont and Savoy, the highest point 11,570 feet above sea level. The pass was an old unused road, and dangerous on account of brigands and banditti. Bonaparte, be it said to his credit, in 1803, spent £300,000 in repairing it, and it was here the great Napoleon III. sent his troops into Italy against Austria in 1859. The tunnel is about eight miles in length. To make it was a work of almost superhuman labour and skill. It was commenced by two sets of men, one on the Italian side and one set on the French side, in the year 1857; and so exact had been the calculations made, that when the men met in the middle, they were not a single foot out of their calculations. The cost was nearly £3,000,000, and quite a number of valuable lives.

Now, both for business and pleasure, a way has been opened to the sunny south. We settled in our respective corners as we pierced this great mountain, and gave ourselves up to reflection.

The great train thundered on, and silence largely held us all in its thrall. The half-hour in going through Mont Cenis seemed almost half-a-day. At last we emerged into the day light, and into

the glorious sunshine of sunny Italy, with its vine-clad hills, and its serene and sunny sky—"Land of all lands the pride," leaving behind us the Alpine heights (to revisit them on our return). We were running for Turin. We found we had no buffet on the train, and as we had not laid in a stock of refreshments, we began to feel the cravings of nature, and we began to wonder how they were to be satisfied. We ultimately pulled up at Turin; how long we were to stop I did not know, and I could not ask, for now it was beyond my bit of French. I said to my dear wife, here goes, we must have bread or starve: if the train leaves before I return to you—well, good-bye! But I will do my best to be back in a few minutes and before the train leaves. Without hat I rushed down the platform looking for a buffet, right at the bottom of a long platform I saw the word buffet. I darted in, threw down a lire, and picked up two rolls of bread worth about twopence each, also some fruit worth about as much. I seized these and hurried back to the carriage, passengers and people looking on and the waiters seemed to think I must be an escaped lunatic.

Well! I reached our carriage just as the train was moving out.

What would have happened if I had been left behind I do not care to think. "All's well that ends well." So we got at least something that would keep soul and body together until we could get a proper meal. We had decided to stop at Genoa, but my wife said "well, now Nurse is going right through to Rome, let us keep her company." So we decided not to remain at Genoa, but to go right through; that meant twenty-four hours in the train.

As we were approaching Genoa we could see lovely vine-clad slopes, also the hills, the rivers and lakes, the landscapes, lovely beyond my power to describe.

Genoa is a very fine city. I felt I could say of it as is said of the City of Jerusalem. Beautiful for situation is Genoa. Here we found we should have time for dinner; twenty minutes being allowed. We left our carriage—now I had two nurses to take care of—we had to go under some arches, and across several platforms, to get to the buffet; this took us five minutes out of the twenty. We found, to our extreme satisfaction, a table-de-hote fully set out. Soup was laid out and waiting; waiters plenty. No sooner one course was over, another was before us—chicken, fish, saddle of mutton, pastry, ices, and more than we needed—so that in ten minutes we had well satisfied the inner man. Cigars were lying on the counter, and each passenger having dinner just helped himself, also to as much fruit as we could conveniently take. We were also helping ourselves to Post Cards but these, we were reminded, we must pay for as extra. So we scampered back with all speed. Never, I think, did a dinner of eight courses disappear so quickly. We had no time to explore the town, and we could only get glimpses of it from the train going in. It is called "le Superb." Has some of the finest churches in Italy; is also a city of Commerce, of Shipping. It is a garrisoned city, and has fortifications considered impregnable. It is a city of palaces.

Also has a picture gallery containing some fine paintings by the old masters, one by Guercino, in the very best colouring, "Virgin

and Child." This has been a favourite subject of the Artists, as both in oils and in marble and stone, this subject is prominent.

"The Flight into Egypt" is another favourite. These, however, we had not the pleasure of seeing, so we could only have the pleasure of knowing we had been near them. We left Genoa about 9 p.m.; it was quite dark, and so sultry we could hardly bear the heat of the atmosphere. We hutched up into our corners to try to sleep, but with the rattle of the train, the screams of the baby, and the impatience of the mother, we could not sleep, at least I could not. I think my wife got a little sleep. So did the nurse, our travelling companion. Before midnight, there broke over us a thunder storm. The lightning was so vivid I could clearly see the objects we passed, and it continued for several hours. We passed the leaning tower of Pisa before daylight broke in upon us, we were also getting too tired to enjoy the look out when the day broke.

As we sped on we expected to see the City of Rome about 10 a.m. At last the vision burst upon our view. Rome at last. Yes, certainly, there is the proud City. Its towers, spires and domes, and minarets, all glistening in the morning sun. The monuments and ruins of this city still standing testifies to the greatness of its past history. The gigantic Colosseum to the humblest of ruins, everything in Rome is eloquent in the language of history. We soon hunted up our luggage, and made our way out of the carriage to the platform. After a few words with our companion, the Nurse, we separated. She was expecting to be met, and we were

anxious to get to our hotel. This time we had chosen the "Grand Hotel Continental," and finding their 'bus at the station we were soon conveyed to our destination.

The hotel was certainly of a high-class order, and very extensive. The grand saloon for dining was most costly furnished. Mirrors and paintings on the walls gave brilliancy and attractiveness to the scene. The lecture room, the smoke room, the reading room, were all most luxuriantly fitted up. The bed rooms also were sweet and clean. Abundance of lavatories, bathrooms, lifts, etc., make the place a comfortable home from home. After having fixed our number (I mean the number of our bed room, this was always our first business at a fresh hotel) we had breakfast, then a bath, for we had no opportunity of even a good wash since leaving Chambery twenty-four hours ago.

We were needing it badly. An ample supply of hot water for the bath, towels ready to hand, soap we carried with us. We thought it strange, but we found it true, the hotels don't find soap.

This reminds me of Mark Twain's position when in Italy, in his "Innocents Abroad." He says, "We have had a bath in Milan, in a public house. They were going to put all three of us in one bath tub, but we objected. We chose to have three tubs, and large ones —tubs suited to the dignity of aristocrats who had real estate, and brought it with them. After we were stripped and had taken the first chilly dash, we discovered that haunting atrocity that has embittered our lives in so many cities and villages of Italy, there was no soap. I called. A woman answered and I barely had time

to throw myself against the door, before she would have been in, in another second. I said, 'Beware, woman! Go away from here —go away, now, or it will be worse for you. I am an unprotected male, but I will preserve my honour at the peril of my life.'" We had a good bath, then to bed for a few hours, as we had had hardly any sleep in the train. We rose about 2.30 p.m. refreshed, and after lunch we prepared for a stroll or ride to see the sights of this wonderful city. We soon found it is a wonderful city. The ancient and the modern are seen at almost every point. And yet you seem to feel there is no jar on your taste or feeling.

CHAPTER V

Visit to the Forum and the Colosseum: Crossing the Tiber: Castle of St. Angelo: Palace of Justice: Trajan's Column: Garibaldi's Monument: The Appian Way: St. Peter's: Its magnitude and magnificence: Michael Angelo's work.

Our first visit was to the Colosseum. Among the many sights of Rome none give us a better idea of its ancient civilisation than the Forum and the Colosseum. The heart of the great Roman Empire throbbed in the Forum. Here was, at one time, the Senate, the market, the courts, indeed, it was the very centre of the life of Rome. As we gazed upon the ruins, the vast marble columns, still standing, its broken arches, and gables in ruins, it needed no great stretch of the imagination to fancy we were back to the palmy days of Rome, and the Forum is ringing with the cheers of the vast populace who have sat under Cicero's eloquence; or, we fancy we can hear the tramp of Roman legions as they return from some nightly conquest, passing the gates of this remarkable building. The ground it covered would be about 250,000 square feet. These, of course, embraced the market place, the rostrum, several temples, and the triumphal arch. The whole building was of marble, and with its marvellous architecture, it must, in its glory, have presented a striking appearance. The Palace of Cæsar stands just behind.

We had a chance of seeing a little of the gardens, once belonging to this palace. Enough of the remains serve to show something of the wealth and luxury of those ancient Emperors. I took two snap-shots of a part of the ruins of this wonderful place. In my photograph the marble columns are seen to be standing, and they are where they have stood for the last fifteen hundred years at least. From here to the Colosseum, no less wonderful than the Forum, we then made our way. The first view of it filled us with awe. In its ruins it is awfully grand. It must surely be the most imposing ruin in Rome, and it is the most historically interesting relic of ruin in the world. Vespasian began to build it in the year 72 A.D., and the Emperor Titus completed it in the year 80 A.D. Historians tell us it was built by the forced labour of Jews and Christians. Its architect, they tell us, was one "Gaudentius," who afterwards became a Christian, and died a martyr within the walls he himself had planned and helped to build. Originally it would hold in all 100,000 people, and 90,000 could be seated in its vast galleries and rooms. It would cover, apparently, about six acres of land. Down to the sixth century it remained in its beauty undiminished, and little decayed. Inside the vast building was a fine statue of Nero. The extreme length of the walls outside are about six hundred feet, and the width nearly five hundred feet. There was originally a portico carried round the whole building, adorned with gilded columns, while statues of the finest marble filled the arcades, and there were rich awnings of silk for a protection from the sun's heat. It is stated the carnival lasted for

several weeks, and no less than five thousand wild beasts, some from the Indian Jungles, and some from the African morasses took part. These terrible gladiator fights were the amusements for the aristocracy of Italy, and were attended by stately courtiers and the nobles of the land. We saw the bars still standing in the ruins, behind which the wild beasts lurked, waiting to be turned into the arena to fight with gladiators, i.e., men trained, who with their lives in their hands were prepared for this terrible ordeal. If they came out with the trophy they were applauded, and with honours escorted through the streets of Rome.

Sometimes, at the bidding of the wicked Emperor Nero, one hundred Christians would be brought into the arena, when a vast crowd would be present to watch four or five lions and as many tigers turned in, wild with fury, and mad with hunger, the Christian martyrs were soon delivered from their fleshly tenement and went up to their reward. It is said that St. Ignatius was brought from Antioch to be devoured by these wild beasts. Church traditions record many martyrs within these now ruins. Byron says:

> "I see before me the Gladiator lie;
> He leans upon his hand, his manly brow
> Consents to death, but conquers agony.
> The arena swims around him, he is gone
> E'er ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch who won.
> He heard it, but he heeded not; his eyes

Were with his heart, and that was far away.
There were his young barbarians all at play.
There was their Dacian mother—he their sire
Butchered to make a Roman holiday."

Or Keble:

"And now the gratings ope, with hideous roar
Leap forth those hungry brutes, while kneel in prayer,
Those heaps of Christians, how their spirits soar
Above or wounds or death."

I stood and gazed, and thought, by those terrible ruins. I think I was as much affected as when I stood and gazed upon those marvellous structures, the Pyramids of Egypt. I took a snap-shot of my dear little wife within the ruins of the Colosseum, and we left it to ponder over its history and its ruin. We thought of the prophecy in prose of an Anglo-Saxon Pilgrim. He said: "While stands the Colosseum, Rome shall stand; when falls the Colosseum, Rome shall fall. And when Rome falls—the world."

"The Pantheon" was one of the places we were delighted with. This dated from before Christ's time, and is now in a wonderful state of preservation. It was originally dedicated by Agrippa to "All the gods." It was consecrated as a church in the year 610 A.D. by Pope Boniface IV., under the name of St. Maria.

The portico consists of sixteen granite corinthian columns nearly forty feet high, eight in the front and the others in three

colonnades. Inside, we were struck with its beauty, especially by the arrangement for light which comes from a vast dome over our heads. We walked reverently as we knew we were walking on the very same pavement as Augustus and Agrippa, and others whose dust has long centuries ago, gone to its mother earth.

Here rest the remains of one of the world's greatest painters —Raphael. He was buried in 1620. In recent years a doubt was raised as to whether he really was buried here, and a search was allowed and made in 1833, it was then ascertained beyond the shadow of a doubt that he was buried here, as his remains were intact. On leaving the Pantheon, and before crossing the Tiber, we were reminded of the poet's words referring to this church: "Simple, erect, austere, sublime—Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods from Jove to Jesus—Spared and blest by time, looking tranquilly while falls or nods arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods his way through thorns and ashes—glorious dome! shalt thou not last? Times' scythe and tyrant's rods shiver upon thee—Sanctuary and home of art and piety—Pantheon! Pride of Rome."

After crossing the Tiber on one of its many wonderful bridges, adorned on each side by statues in stone of the celebrities of all ages, we found that just opposite this bridge is what is called the Castle of St. Angelo. An immense pile, circular in form, on its summit a large monument, and in front a clock of very large dimensions. It was erected by the Emperor Adrian, and intended to be for his own tomb and those of succeeding kings

or emperors. We did not go inside, but we learned it was fitted and filled with the finest works of art, specially that in marble finished by the sculptor's chisel. From here we started to drive to our hotel, for we were satiated with the wonderful sights of Rome. We passed the Palace of Justice, a modern building, indeed, only just having the finishing touches put upon it. It is of granite, the size is immense and the appearance noble. As we passed, churches and theatres seemed to be numerous. Gay and grave, sad and happy, new and old. There "Beeston Humber Motor Cycle" advertised. There the ruins of a building that had stood for a thousand years.

The Column of Trajan calls for a passing note. It is a fine specimen of the Doric order, and very fortunately it is in a good state of preservation. On three sides of the pedestal there are bas-reliefs, on the fourth side is an inscription to Trajan's tomb. On the column are over 20 very fine carvings, representing the various wars in which he had taken part. On the top is a fine statue of the Apostle St. Peter. As we stood and looked upon this ancient monument and thought of the fact that it had stood there for well nigh on 2,000 years, we re-called the words of a poet who represents fairly the condition of things in Trajan's day.

B. E. H. Plumbtree says:

"Through haughty Rome's imperial street
The mighty Trajan rode,
And myrrh and balm and spices sweet
In silver censers glowed;

In car of state erect he stood,
And round him rushing like a flood
The people poured with shout and song,
And every eye through all that throng
Turned to him with delight.
For he had triumphed far and wide,
Had sated Rome's high-soaring pride,
And, laying captive nations low,
Now dragged the pale and trembling foe
Bent down in sore affright.
And still before him spread afar
New pathways for his conquering car,
More crowns of world-wide fame to win
'Mid shouts of warriors battle din:
One triumph being o'er he spurned
And still his fevered spirit burned
New realms, new worlds to gain.
And still his legions on he led,
Legions that ne'er from foe had fled,
The glory of his reign."

We left the mighty column standing in its solitary grandeur, a memorial of man's achievement, while yet other things around us testified to the instability of all earthly things. "Change and decay in all around I see."

We reached our hotel tired and hungry. We, however, soon found the value of a good wash, then a good table-de-hote meal, and then to write up our diaries and think of the day's

experiences, then to go to rest. After a good night's sleep we rose refreshed. Had a good wash, then breakfast. After letters, postcards, etc., we prepared for further investigations of the great city. We went out, but no sooner did we appear in the great square facing our hotel, when, I should think, at least a dozen cabmen turned their horses heads towards us, asking for our patronage. We could only hire one, so we had choice and it fell upon a decent looking man—the very picture of a son of Italy—with a very good looking horse. This time we drove to the mound upon which stands the noble monument to General Garibaldi, the statue of one of Italy's noblest heroes and patriots. Garibaldi was born at Nice in 1807. His family were quite obscure, and without name or fame. His father had a small coasting vessel, and to this, probably, is due something of the adventurous spirit of his son. When he had attained his manhood, he went to Genoa and then to Rome. Here he joined a band called "Young Italy," and as a member of this band he was indicted for treason and sentenced to death.

By some means he escaped this sentence and fled to Marseilles in France. From here to South America, and here he joined the army and fought against Brazil. He became a most adventurous and daring leader. In 1848 he returned to Italy with a view to give himself to the army of Italy. They, however, did not receive him with the cordiality he deserved. He, however, raised an army of 1,500 brave men, like-minded with himself, and went against the Austrians, who were threatening

Italy severely and dangerously. He showed skill and bravery on the field of battle, and so attracted the notice of Victor Immanuel, who with his own hand fastened on the hero's breast the gold medal for military bravery. He became the idol of the nation of Italy, as General Gordon might be called the hero of the Soudan. So Garibaldi may be called the hero of Italy, and as in Gordon's case, riches, titles, conventional distinctions were as nothing, so in the case of this illustrious soldier and hero. He had the honour of a seat in the Parliament of Italy in 1875. The latter part of his life was spent in retirement, and he died suddenly in the year 1882. And here to his memory is erected, in the very heart of the Eternal City, a splendid monument. His life-sized figure in bronze on a fine charger, while around the monument are bas-reliefs of great interest. From this high elevation we had a good view of the city and of the river Tiber, which is about equal to our river Trent for width, it is spanned in several places by bridges. Here we could look down the Appian Way. It would not be difficult, standing here, to imagine just away at yonder port, some ten or twelve miles away, a shipwrecked crew has landed its cargo of grain; also some soldiers with three prisoners, amongst them is Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles. He is chained to a soldier; they come along the Appian Way, where we are just looking—a road that had often rung with the plaudits to the victors in many a hard fought fight. A strange sight to see this poor man, without money, friends, or influence. Yet he was the true conqueror of Rome. He said truly "God hath chosen the

foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty." Cor., chapter I, verse 27. St. Paul says again: "And so we went towards Rome, and from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and the three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." Acts, chapter 28, verses 14 & 15. Paul is allowed to speak for himself, having appealed to Cæsar. "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came to him, preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.