

CHAPTER VII.

Which once more shows the Futility of Passports where Policemen are concerned.

The detective quickly traversed the quay once more in the direction of the Consul's office. At his particular request he was at once ushered into the presence of the official.

"I beg your pardon," he said to the Consul abruptly, "but I have great reason to believe that my man is really on board the Mongolia."
And then Mr. Fix related what had passed between him and the servant.

"Good," replied the Consul; "I should not be sorry to see the rascal's face myself; but perhaps he will not present himself here if the case stands as you believe it does. No thief likes to leave a trace behind him; and moreover, the visa to the passport is not necessary."

"If he is the sharp fellow he ought to be, he will come," replied Mr. Fix.

"To have his passport examined?"

"Yes. Passports are no use, except to worry honest people and to

facilitate the escape of rogues. I have no doubt whatever that this fellow's passport will be all right; but I hope you will not visé it all the same."

"Why not? If the passport is all regular I have no right to refuse my visa," replied the Consul.

"Nevertheless, I must keep the fellow here until I have received the warrant of arrest from London."

"Ah, Mr. Fix, that is your business," said the Consul; "for my part I must--"

The Consul did not conclude the sentence. At that moment a knock was heard, and the servant introduced two strangers, one of whom was the servant who had lately interviewed the detective on the quay. The newcomers were master and servant. The former handed his passport to the Consul, and laconically requested him to attach his visa.

The Consul took the passport and examined it narrowly, while Fix from a corner devoured the stranger with his eyes. When the Consul had perused the document, he said:

"You are Phileas Fogg?"

"Yes," replied that gentleman.

"And this man is your servant?"

"Yes; he is a Frenchman named Passe-partout."

"You have come from London?"

"Yes."

"And you are bound--whither?"

"To Bombay."

"Very well, sir. You are aware, perhaps, that this formality is unnecessary, even useless. We only require to see the passport."

"I know that," replied Fogg; "but I want you to testify to my presence at Suez."

"Very well, sir, so be it," replied the Consul, who thereupon attested the passport. Mr. Fogg paid the fee, and bowing formally, departed, followed by his servant.

"Well, what do you think, sir?" said the detective.

"I think he looks a perfectly honest man," replied the Consul.

"That may be," said Fix; "but that is not the point. Do you not perceive that this cool gentleman answers in every particular to the description of the thief sent out?"

"I grant you that; but you know all descriptions--"

"I will settle the business," replied Fix. "It strikes me that the servant is more get-at-able than the master. Besides, he is a Frenchman, and cannot help chattering. I will return soon, sir." As he finished speaking, the detective left the Consul's office in search of Passe-partout.

Meanwhile, Mr. Fogg, having left the Consul's house, proceeded down to the quay. There he gave his servant some instructions, and then put off in a boat to the Mongolia, and descended to his cabin. Taking out his note-book, he made the following entries:

Left London, Wednesday, 2nd October, at 8.45 p.m.

Reached Paris, Thursday, at 8.40 a.m.

Arrived at Turin, viâ Mont Cenis, Friday, 4th October, 6.35 a.m.

Left Turin, Friday, at 7.20 a.m.

Arrived at Brindisi, Saturday, 5th October, 4 p.m.

Embarked on Mongolia, Saturday, 5 p.m.

Reached Suez, Wednesday, 9th October, 11 a.m.

Total of hours occupied in the journey, $158\frac{1}{4}$, or $6\frac{1}{2}$ days.

Mr. Fogg made these entries in a journal ruled in columns, commencing on the 2nd of October, and so on to the 21st of December, which indicated respectively the month, the day of the month, and the day of the week, as well as the days at which he was due at the principal places en route--as, for instance, Paris, Brindisi, Suez, Bombay, Calcutta, Singapore, Hong Kong, Yokohama, San Francisco, New York, Liverpool, London. There was also a column in which the gain or loss upon the stipulated time could be entered against each place. This methodical arrangement of dates showed Mr. Fogg whether he was in advance or behindhand, and contained all necessary information.

So on that occasion, Wednesday, the 9th of October, was recorded as the day of his arrival at Suez, and he perceived at a glance that he had neither gained nor lost so far.

He then had his luncheon sent into his cabin. It did not occur to him to go and look at the town; he was one of those gentlemen who are quite content to see foreign countries through the eyes of their servants.