

## CHAPTER XXXV.

Passe-partout obeys Orders quickly.

The inhabitants of Saville Row would have been astonished, next day, if they had been told that Mr. Fogg had returned, for the doors and windows of his house were still shut, and there was no change visible exteriorly.

When he left the railway-station, Mr. Fogg had told Passe-partout to purchase some provisions, and then he quietly went home.

Mr. Fogg preserved his usual impassibility under the trying circumstances; he was ruined, and all through the fault of that blundering detective. After having achieved his long journey, overcome a thousand obstacles, braved a thousand dangers, and even found time to do some good on the way, to fail at the very moment that success was certain was indeed terrible. A very small portion remained to him of the large sum he had taken away with him; his whole fortune was comprised in the twenty thousand pounds deposited at Baring's, and that sum he owed to his colleagues at the club. After having paid all expenses, even had he won he would have been none the richer, and it is not likely he wished to be richer, for he was one of those men who bet for reputation; but this wager would ruin his altogether. However,

he had fully made up his mind what to do.

A room had been set aside for Aouda, who felt Mr. Fogg's ruin very deeply. From certain words she had heard she understood he was meditating some serious measures. Knowing that Englishmen of an eccentric turn of mind sometimes commit suicide, Passe-partout kept watch on his master unobserved; but the first thing the lad did was to extinguish the gas in his room, which had been burning for eighty days. In the letter-box he had found the gas company's bill, and thought it was quite time to put a stop to such an expense.

The night passed. Mr. Fogg went to bed, but it is doubtful whether he slept. Aouda was quite unable to rest, and Passe-partout kept watch like a dog at his master's door.

Next day, Mr. Fogg told him, shortly, to attend to Mrs. Aouda's breakfast, while he would have a cup of tea and a chop. He excused himself from joining Aouda at meals on the plea of putting his affairs in order, and it was not till evening that he asked for an interview with the young lady.

Passe-partout having received his orders had only to obey them, but he found it impossible to leave his master's room. His heart was full, his conscience was troubled with remorse, for he could not help blaming himself for the disaster. If he had only warned his master about Fix, Mr. Fogg would not have brought the detective to Liverpool,

and then--

Passe-partout could hold out no longer.

"Oh, Mr. Fogg!" he exclaimed, "do you not curse me? It is all my fault--"

"I blame no one," replied Phileas Fogg, in his usual calm tone. "Go!"

Passe-partout quitted the room and sought Mrs. Aouda, to whom he delivered his message.

"Madam," he added, "I am powerless. I have no influence over my master's mind; perhaps you may have."

"What influence can I have?" she replied; "Mr. Fogg will submit to no one. Has he really ever understood how grateful I am to him? Has he ever read my heart? He must not be left alone an instant. You say he is going to see me this evening?"

"Yes, madam. No doubt to make arrangements for your sojourn in England."

"Let us wait, then," replied the young lady, becoming suddenly thoughtful.

So, through all that Sunday, the house in Saville Row appeared uninhabited; and for the first time since he had lived in it, Phileas Fogg did not go to his club as Big Ben was striking half-past eleven.

And why should he go to the Reform Club? His friends did not expect him. As he had not appeared in time to win the wager, it was not necessary for him to go to the bank and draw his twenty thousand pounds. His antagonists had his blank cheque; it only remained for them to fill it up and present it for payment.

As Mr. Fogg, then, had no object in going out, he stayed in his room and arranged his business matters. Passe-partout was continually running up and down stairs, and thought the day passed very slowly. He listened at his master's door, and did not think it wrong; he looked through the keyhole, for every instant he feared some catastrophe. Sometimes he thought of Fix, but without any animosity. Fix, like everyone else, had been mistaken, and had only done his duty in following Mr. Fogg, while he (Passe-partout)-- The thought haunted him, and he thought himself the most wretched of men.

He was so unhappy that he could not bear to remain alone, so he knocked at Mrs. Aouda's sitting-room, and, permitted to enter, sat down in a corner, without speaking. She, too, was very pensive.

About half-past seven Mr. Fogg asked permission to go in; he took a chair and sat close by the fireplace, opposite to the young lady; he

betrayed no emotion--the Fogg who had come back was the same as the Fogg who had gone away. There was the same calmness, the same impassibility.

For five minutes he did not speak, then he said: "Madam, can you forgive me for having brought you to England?"

"I, Mr. Fogg!" exclaimed Mrs. Aouda, trying to check the beating of her heart.

"Pray allow me to finish," continued Mr. Fogg. "When I asked you to come to this country I was rich, and had determined to place a portion of my fortune at your disposal. You would have been free and happy. Now I am ruined."

"I know it, Mr. Fogg," she replied; "and I, in my turn, have to ask your pardon for having followed you, and, who knows, retarded you, and thus contributed to your ruin."

"You could not have remained in India," replied Mr. Fogg, "and your safety was only assured by taking you quite away from those fanatics who wished to arrest you."

"So, Mr. Fogg," she replied, "not satisfied with having saved me from death, you wished to insure my comfort in a foreign country."

"I did," replied Fogg; "but fate was unpropitious. However, I wish to place at your disposal the little I have left."

"But," she exclaimed, "what will become of you, Mr. Fogg?"

"Of me, madam? I am in want of nothing."

"But," she continued, "how can you bear to look upon the fate in store for you?"

"As I always look at everything," replied Mr. Fogg; "in the best way I can."

"At any rate," said Aouda, "your friends will not permit you to want anything."

"I have no friends, madam."

"Your relations, then."

"I have no relations now."

"Oh then indeed I pity you, Mr. Fogg. Solitude is a terrible thing. Not a single person to whom you can confide your sorrow? Though they say that even grief, shared with another, is more easily supported."

"So they say, madam."

"Mr. Fogg," said Aouda, rising and extending her hand to him, "do you care to possess at the same time a relative and a friend? Will you take me for your wife?"

Mr. Fogg had risen also. There was an unusual gleam in his eyes, and his lips trembled. Aouda looked at him. In this regard of a noble woman, who had dared everything to save the man to whom she owed her life, her sincerity, firmness, and sweetness were all apparent. He was at first astonished, and then completely overcome. For a moment his eyes closed, as if to avoid her glance, and when he opened them again he said simply:

"I love you. By all I hold sacred, I love you dearly; and I am yours for ever."

"Ah!" exclaimed Mrs. Aouda, as she pressed her hand upon her bosom.

Passe-partout was immediately summoned. Mr. Fogg was still holding the lady's hand. Passe-partout understood it all, and his face became radiant.

Mr. Fogg asked him if it were too late to notify the Rev. Samuel Wilson, of Marylebone Church, about the wedding.

Passe-partout smiled, as he replied, "It is never too late." It was then five minutes past eight.

"Will the wedding take place to-morrow, Monday?" he said

"Shall we say to-morrow?" asked Mr. Fogg, turning to Aouda.

"If you please," she replied, blushing.

Passe-partout hurried away as fast as he could go.