

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Showing how Phileas Fogg gained only Happiness by his Tour round the World.

Yes, it was Phileas Fogg in person.

Our readers will recollect that at five minutes after eight that evening--about twenty-five hours after our travellers' arrival in London--Passe-partout had been requested to arrange about a certain marriage with the Rev. Samuel Wilson. Passe-partout had gone on his mission rejoicing, but the clergyman was not at home. He naturally waited, but he was kept at least twenty minutes.

It was 8.35 when he left the clergyman's house, but what a state he was in! His hair was disordered, he ran home without his hat, overturning the passers-by as he went rushing along the pathway.

In three minutes he was back in Saville Row, and he rushed breathlessly into Mr. Fogg's room.

He was unable to speak.

"What is the matter?" asked Mr. Fogg.

"Oh, sir--the marriage--impossible."

"Impossible?"

"Impossible for to-morrow."

"Why so?"

"Because to-morrow is--Sunday."

"It is Monday," said Mr. Fogg.

"No, to-day is Saturday."

"Saturday? impossible."

"It is, it is!" exclaimed Passe-partout. "You have made a mistake of one day. We arrived twenty-four hours before our time, but we have only ten minutes left now."

As he spoke Passe-partout fairly dragged his master out of his chair.

Phileas Fogg, thus seized, had no choice. He rushed downstairs, jumped into a cab, promised the driver a hundred pounds, ran over two dogs, came into collision with five cabs, and reached the Reform Club at

8.45.

So Phileas Fogg had accomplished the journey round the world in eighty days, and had won his bet of twenty thousand pounds.

Now how was it that such a methodical man could have made a mistake of a day? How could he imagine that he had got back on Saturday the 21st when it was really Friday the 20th, seventy-nine days after his departure?

The reason is very simple.

Phileas Fogg had unconsciously gained a day, simply because he journeyed always eastward, whereas, had he journeyed westward, he would have lost a day.

In fact, travelling towards the east, he had gone towards the south, and consequently the days got shorter as many times four minutes as he crossed degrees in that direction. There are three hundred and sixty degrees, and these multiplied by four minutes give exactly twenty-four hours; that is the day Fogg gained. In other words, while Phileas Fogg, going east, saw the sun pass the meridian eighty times, his friends in London only saw it seventy-nine times, and that is why on that day, which was Saturday, and not Sunday, as Mr. Fogg thought, they expected him at the Reform Club.

Passe-partout's wonderful watch, which had always kept London time, would have confirmed this had it only marked the days as well as the hours and minutes.

So Phileas Fogg had won his twenty thousand pounds, but as he had expended nearly nineteen thousand pounds, his gain was small. However, he had not bet for money. He actually divided the thousand pounds that remained between honest Passe-partout and the unfortunate Fix, against whom he bore no malice. But from Passe-partout's share he deducted, on principle, the cost of the gas which had been burning for one thousand nine hundred and twenty hours. That same evening Mr. Fogg, as tranquilly as ever, said to Aouda, "Is the prospect of our marriage still agreeable to you?"

"Mr. Fogg," she replied, "it is I who ought to have asked you that question. You were ruined then, but now you are rich."

"Excuse me, madam," he replied, "this fortune belongs to you. If you had not thought of the wedding, my servant would never have gone to see Mr. Wilson, and I should not have found out my mistake."

"Dear Mr. Fogg," said the young lady.

"My dearest Aouda," replied Phileas Fogg.

The marriage took place forty-eight hours afterwards, and

Passe-partout, beaming and resplendent, gave the bride away. Had he not saved her life, and was he not entitled to the honour?

On the wedding morning Passe-partout knocked at his master's door.

"What is the matter, Passe-partout?"

"Well, sir, I have just this moment found out that we might have gone round the world in seventy-eight days only."

"No doubt," replied Mr. Fogg, "if we had not crossed India; but if I had not crossed India we should not have rescued Mrs. Aouda, and she would never have been my wife."

And Mr. Fogg shut the door quietly.

So Phileas Fogg won his wager, and made the tour of the world in eighty days. To do this he had made use of every means of transport--steamers, railways, carriages, yacht, trading-ship, sledges, and elephants. That eccentric gentleman had displayed all through his most marvellous qualities of coolness and exactness; and after all what had he really gained? What had he brought back?

"Nothing," do you say? Well, perhaps so, if a charming woman is nothing, who, however extraordinary it may appear, made him the happiest of men.

And in truth, reader, would not you go round the world for less than that?

THE END.