

# ROUND THE WORLD TRAVEL LETTERS

By CLARENCE POE

## VI.—Crossing the Pacific.

"Let every kindred, every tribe,  
On this terrestrial ball,  
To Him all majesty ascribe  
And crown Him Lord of all."

NEVER HAVE I heard the words of the old hymn under circumstances so appropriate as on yesterday, for as the voices of the singers on our steamer mingled with the low thunder of the Pacific's waves, I was struck by the fact that I and my four acquaintances who sat on the seat with me, ourselves represented three continents and five nations. On my right was a Chinese student, going home from America; on my left a German lawyer; my third friend with me was born in Scotland, the fourth was a Japanese physician—all Christians. Yet my Chinese friend is probably the first of his line in all the long centuries to recognize any God save the gods of Buddhism, Confucianism or Taoism; the Japanese comes from a land from which but a few centuries ago Christianity was relentlessly rooted out with fire and sword-edge, martyr after martyr dying for his faith; nor has it been so many centuries since ancestors of the Scotchman, the German, and myself worshipped the strange wild gods of northern Europe.

### II.

As will be inferred, of course, from what I have said, yesterday was Sunday, which in itself is not a matter worth mentioning, but it alters the case when I say that this was the second Sunday in seven days: six days before yesterday's service I was also hearing the litany on a Sunday morning. The explanation is that we had no Friday last week; we went to sleep Thursday night and when we woke up next morning, behold it was Saturday!

Now perhaps my hardest task is to explain this explanation, and my limited space makes it necessary to leave the full discussion to the geographies and encyclopedias. Let me say briefly, however, that all ships drop a day about this point in the Pacific Ocean, and if they did not, American passengers would get back home with a day to spare. If you should start around the world at sunrise in some Phebus chariot traveling just as fast as the sun, it would be sunrise everywhere you should go the whole world round, and on reaching home sunrise still: you would have known nothing save one continuous sunrise and yet a whole twenty-four hours would have elapsed. So it is in traveling slowly around the world westward with the sun just as in traveling rapidly with it: we gain on it the larger part of an hour a day, and we have enough 24-24½- or 25-hour days to make up for the 24 hours that we lose. Going from Raleigh to Birmingham, or from New Orleans to Denver, one sets one's watch back an hour for the time gained in traveling with the sun: if you go round the world the gain is a full 24-hours, and it simply saves trouble to drop the day out here in mid-ocean rather than elsewhere.

### III.

I ought to feel at home on the "Korea" for a conspicuous bronze tablet tells us that she was built in Newport News, Va., her timbers felled in Southern woods, and her unnumbered tons of steel and wood wrought into gigantic harmony by Southern workmen. That is a Dixie achievement to be proud of; an achievement if not more worthy, at least much more needed now, than any high-sounding oration on States' rights, or any studied essay on what the South might have accomplished under other conditions. This splendid vessel, so her commander tells me, burns 160 tons of coal a day; she starts out from San Francisco with 3,500 tons in her hold, and her crew alone consists of nearly 300 men.

### IV.

What I have already said concerning the variety of peoples represented at the church service yesterday suggests the cosmopolitan character of our ship's population. The other day when I sailed for a game of shuffle-board, the four participants quite accidentally represented three continents, and our line-up was "The Old World vs.

the New." On my left at the table is a missionary in Japan; on my right an officer in the Philippine army; in front of me sits a dark-skinned Hawaiian, and across from him a Chinaman (a merchant, I think,) from Honolulu. Another young Chinaman near by (neither of these wears a queue) has received military training in the United States and is going back to take a position in the cavalry of the now strongly organized Chinese army. A young California newspaper man aboard expects to get some preparation in the Orient as a future war correspondent, thinking it likely that the opportunity will come within ten years. A young lady from Oregon is bound for India where she will teach "the poor, benighted Hindoo." A cotton manufacturer (white) from Shanghai is here who pays his thousand hands 20 to 28 cents Mexican money—equivalent to 12 cents American money—for 13½ hours' work, and says it is too much because the Chinaman saves up so much money he won't work regularly! A captain in the British Army is just back from South America and much impressed by its wonderful commercial possibilities. My room-mate is superintendent of school garden work in the Philippines, and says that agriculture in the schools is making progress among the Filipinos in a way to put many American States to shame. A Southern-born man who came on board at Honolulu has been around the world eight times, and "works" one continent after another as agent for a wholesale rubber industry. Then there is the callow young fellow bound for the Philippines who has already lost all his money playing poker and is borrowing from friends; a man who six months ago thought himself with \$100,000 and is now penniless because of the failure of his rubber corporations, and other interesting men and women to whom I might introduce you.

### V.

Most notable of all, perhaps, is a party of Pacific Coast business men representing the chambers of commerce in eleven California, Oregon, and Washington cities who are making a visit to China as the guests of certain leading Chinese chambers of commerce, the object being to promote trade between the two nations. This is a very wise and important movement, for these men in two months, seeing for themselves, will learn more than they would have learned in a lifetime of reading and talking in America. And this matter leads me to wonder if our Southern chambers of commerce and business and manufacturing organizations generally can not inaugurate some plans for getting into closer touch with South American countries. If the people of the United States think that this trade will fall into their laps like a ripe apple from an autumn tree, they are very much mistaken. We have been thinking that the Panama Canal would open up our trade to the Orient, but here again the irrepressible and unexpected Jap bobs up to remind us that it is a poor rule that won't work both ways, and a leading Japanese authority has already published a volume in which he points out the great advantage the canal will be to Japan in building up trade with eastern South America. Now the long trip around the Horn prevents any great trade with Brazil, Venezuela, and the tremendously fertile Argentine Republic, but with the great ditch finished, the Japanese manufacturer and trader will "carry the war into Africa," and the flag of the Mikado will jostle the Stars and Stripes on the Atlantic, in the Caribbean Sea, and in our Gulf of Mexico.

### VI.

So much by way of introducing some fellow-passengers. There are practically no pretty girls aboard, and I wonder whether it is because travel between Asia and America is too largely on business bent to bring out the fair ones, or is it that my Southern standard of beauty is too high? I notice that Henry T. Finck, who has written a charming book on Japan, points out in it that wherever you go—whether in Japan, Spain, Germany, or Italy—the women are prettier the further south you go; but it looks as if our lower

## "What's The News?"

THE GREAT forest fires in Minnesota again call attention to the real criminality of our neglect to provide adequate protection against forest fires. Hundreds of people burned to death, thousands homeless, millions of dollars properly destroyed—principally, or entirely, because of the "economy" that forbade the spending of a few thousands of dollars for the prevention of forest fires. Yet some of our Southern newspapers complacently tell us that such fires can not happen in the South, entirely ignoring the fact, that even if we are spared these great fires, our annual loss by smaller ones amounts to millions.

\*\*\*

The new census figures are showing some remarkable things. One of the most interesting is the great increase in the population of many Southern cities. In 1900 Birmingham had 38,415 people; in 1910, 132,685. Atlanta increased in the same time from 89,872 to 154,839, and Richmond from 85,050 to 127,823. New Orleans now has 339,075 people against 287,104 ten years ago; while San Antonio, Texas, nearly doubled in population and Fort Worth almost trebled. These gains are, most of them, phenomenal, and while in some cases the effort to annex "all the territory that joins them," accounts for much of the increase, and while it is possible that some of the reports were "padded" after the manner of some Western cities, the figures still tell a wonderful story of the development of Southern cities. The big cities all over the country have, as a rule, made a healthy growth, sometimes a startling one, as in the case of Detroit, Mich., which gained over 60 per cent. The country districts, however, tell a far different tale. The rural population has actually decreased in such great agricultural States as Missouri and Iowa. The same is true in Michigan, in Delaware, in Vermont; and while it is not believed that any Southern State will show an actual decrease, there is no probability that the growth of the country districts will be anything in proportion to that of the towns. In other words, not only has the comparative gain of the cities on the country probably exceeded that of any decade in our history, but there has been a cessation of rural growth that is at once suggestive and alarming. Thoughtful men have long been telling us that our governmental policies, as a whole, favored the cities at the expense of the country, and these figures go far to sustain their contention. In this same connection may be mentioned the interesting fact that in the last eight months, for the first time in American history, manufactured goods comprised over half the total exports. This is well; it is always well to export the finished product rather than the raw materials; but is it not time to cease the policy of protecting these manufacturers at the expense of the agricultural producers?

\*\*\*

The sudden death last Saturday of Senator Jonathan P. Dolliver, of Iowa, removes one of the ablest and most influential members of the Senate. Promoted from the House after a distinguished service there, he was regarded as one of the Republican "wheel-horses" until the question of tariff revision came up. He at once sided with such insurgents as La Follette and Cummins and, by reason of his oratorical ability and his wide range of learning, soon became the real leader of the Senate insurgents. A speech last spring in which he attacked President Taft was almost of classic strength and style. His place will be hard to fill.

\*\*\*

Walter Wellman has started across the Atlantic in an airship. His machine is equipped with a wireless telegraph outfit, and he is keeping in touch with the land.

\*\*\*

The new Republic of Portugal appears to be firmly established. There have been some riots, directed mostly against the religious orders, but the government seems to have been able to put them down. Of course, no one knows yet what the end may be. Spain continues an armed camp, the King and his forces waiting with grim expectancy an anticipated outbreak.

\*\*\*

Mr. Roosevelt has been making campaign speeches in Missouri and Indiana, and is now in New York. He will be followed in Indiana by Mr. Bryan.

\*\*\*

Winslow Homer, the foremost painter of American landscapes, is dead.

These letters are partly protected by copyright, but we shall be glad to have editors reprint not more than one-third of any one article. This is No. 6 of the series.