

CONTINENTAL TRIPS AS A MEANS OF EDUCATION.



HARWICH.



YES, a very pleasant means, but a pretty expensive one," may be the exclamation of many who read the title of this short article. But my intention is to attempt to prove that many a young man whose education has been neglected, or whose "people were too poor to pay much for my schooling," may, without extravagance, enjoy the pleasure of a Continental trip, and be well repaid—at first by knowledge, and in the long run by a fund of information that shall be of such monetary value, that it will soon repay all the money spent in gaining it.

I can imagine *soi-disant* aristocratic tourists exclaiming in horror at such a suggestion, "Why, the Continent will be more overrun than ever. Where shall we be able to go?" But as this article is addressed to none but those who are eager for knowledge, all who avail themselves of its hints will hardly be unpleasant people to meet with.

"Is a Continental trip within my means?" is of course the first question, and to this may be asked, Can you save two shillings a week throughout the year? Even the young clerk on thirty shillings a week may easily do this, and thus he has a Continental trip of a fortnight at his disposal.

Those living in the South or East of England have an advantage over those living in the Midlands or the West, as they have no expensive preliminary railway journey to carry away part of their funds. But starting from the ports, such as London, Southampton, Wey-

mouth, Harwich, &c., the return fare to the Continent may be put down at about £1, of course a deck passage; and a night at sea, or rather a few hours on the deck of a steamer, will scarcely harm any young Englishman.

Before starting upon a tour, the district about to be visited should be well read up from all points of view. A quarter of the pleasure of a trip is the preparation for it, and a quarter of the remaining portion the reminiscences that float through the mind after its completion.

The history of the district should be studied, and this will generally bring up the contemporary history of our own country. A slight insight should be gained of architecture and of archæology; for how greatly the pleasure of looking upon some ruin or cathedral is enhanced by knowing from the stones themselves the date at which they were laid one upon the other, and so marvellously wrought! But very slight study will give an insight into these matters, and every step on the tour will impress them upon the mind and enlarge the knowledge of the subject.

Not only should the ordinary guide-books be read, and the history of the district, but also the higher works of fiction, where the authors have led their characters through the scenes about to be visited. Who would care to wander through the Ardennes without having read "Quentin Durward," or down the Rhine without the thoughts in Longfellow's "Hyperion" being present to the mind, or through Brussels without having read "Villette"? Guide-books are but useful

as indicating the literature of a district, although only too often tourists accept them as being *the* literature itself.

The names of great authors who have lived within the circle of the town open up another pleasant field for reading, and as he journeys on the tourist will find pleasure upon pleasure growing before him. The art galleries will introduce him to the names of great artists, and thus to their lives; and the pleasant concerts will tell him of musicians and their works, and train his ear to a more acute and intense enjoyment of glorious music, and an abhorrence of discordant attempts at music.

Upon the steamboat the educational advantages commence. Eyes and ears should be kept alive to all incidents passing around them. Scraps of a foreign tongue are heard, and the mere listening to these is slowly assisting the ear to more readily grasp the language. Curious characters are met with, and if calmly looked upon from the standpoint of an observant mind, they may be of much service in after-years as teaching traits of character.

Upon landing for the first time on a foreign shore, every peculiarity forcibly strikes the eye, but unless these peculiarities are noted, gradually the eye becomes accustomed to them, and they at last merge themselves into a general idea that there are no peculiarities worthy of note.

And this leads up to that important little item to an inquiring tourist, a note-book. Never mind the chaff of companions or the sneers of highly-cultured reviewers at other people's note-books. If you would remember and enjoy in after-years the pleasures of

first foreign trips, take a note-book, and use it frequently; fill it with notes and if possible with sketches.

Before starting, the tour should be mapped out, putting each day in a margin, and the work to be done and the pleasure enjoyed by its side; but leaving a day or two, according to the length of the tour, free for any pleasurable incident which may turn up; or to allow for the visiting of some adjacent spot which perhaps has been unnoted.

A useful addendum to the note-book will be a tiny account-book, in which to note daily expenses, making the young tourist accustomed to accounts in foreign currency. If he has but the slightest acquaintance with the language, let him air that little acquaintance as much as possible; he will at any rate amuse his fellow-travellers, and they will be quite ready to assist him; and in but a few days he will find the foreign tongue becoming stronger within him and of more value.

Perhaps some objections may be made to the statement of the amount with which a foreign tour may be accomplished; but, as the reader will see by the following examples of various days' expenditure, the sum mentioned is quite sufficient to have an enjoyable tour. But to live at these rates, all fashionable towns must be shunned; or when in them, use the business hotels, which are quite as comfortable, and where far more attention will be shown to the traveller than in the noted tourist hotels.

In walking, the tourist can generally put up at a village near a town, and so will save immensely, see far more of the people, and fare well. Near Dinant in Belgium the following was a day's expense:— Breakfast, 1'09; dinner, 2'45; supper, 1'50; bed and



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attendance, 2'25 : equal to 6f. 29c., or 5s. On the Rhine:—Breakfast, 1s. 2d. ; dinner, 2s. ; tea, 1s. 3d. ; bed and service, 2s. 6d. : equal to 6s. 11d. At Avanches:—Breakfast, 1 franc; dinner, 2 francs; tea, 0'75; bed and service, 2'50: equal to 6f. 25c., that is, 5s. The dinner in this case, it being Sunday, was a remarkably good one, with an excellent dessert of the choicest fruits.

The above three instances might be multiplied from cases in all parts of Europe, it always being understood that the hotels are good ones, but in quiet towns or villages. At Neumagen on the Moselle, we had once (at the postmaster's—the inns being all full with visitors to a church fête) an excellent family dinner, breakfast in the morning, and a double-bedded room with attendance, for 4s. 6d. ; that is including two dinners and two breakfasts. And this will give the tourist the hint that, if the regular inns are all full, it may even be an advantage, and that he should look about him and not think of going further afield.

In using the railways no one who wishes to know a country and its people should travel above third-class. Here will be found brisker conversation, and a general wish to aid a foreign traveller; frequently many a good subject for the sketch-book will be met with, and many a touching little incident be observed of the homely life of the people.

In Belgium the third-class fares are excessively low; for example, one can travel from Ostend to Yprès, Yprès to Courtrai, Courtrai to Tournai, Tournai to Brussels, and Brussels to Antwerp, for eight shillings. A glance at a map will show the distance covered, and what a wealth of knowledge may be gained in such a run! Architecture, language, music, painting, history, all may be studied; and from such a trip the young tourist will return, if he but have the true yearning for knowledge, a more cultured man; of more value in society, and in business; and he will have experienced far truer enjoyment, than if he had spent double the amount in a sojourn at some slangy English watering-place, where the only change from his ordinary life would be a little more laziness, a little more smoking; or if he be superior to these matters, where he will have learnt but little to advance him in life, nor experienced such an entire change of life as to so largely benefit him in health.

In the words of Longfellow, "To the young, travelling is a boundless delight; to the old, a pleasant memory and a tender regret," but never will any young beginner in life regret time or money spent in Continental trips, if but they are undertaken as a source of education; and so undertaken they will be the greatest source of pure and highest pleasure.

J. B.

VINCENT ROMNEY'S RECOMPENSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BRAVE DEED," ETC.

I.



HE test of friendship is self-sacrifice. He who for his comrade's happiness will not lay down his own—ay, and do it cheerfully, uncomplainingly, with no blazoning of the circumstance from the house-tops—has but little real claim

to the sacred denomination of 'friend.'

The words were Vincent Romney's own. He was reading, with a strange sense of a dual consciousness, an essay of his salad days which had been compiled in a sudden access of literary fervour, and sent to half a dozen hard-hearted (or hard-headed) magazine editors in turn. It had come back, politely, and even affectionately, declined by all, had found shelter in a rarely-disturbed drawer of an old bureau for several years, and at last had reappeared to fulfil its mission.

That mission was to present in a compact, concrete form an idea which had been floating in a nebulous condition in Vincent Romney's mind for weeks, if not for months.

He read the high-flown sentiments of his one bid for literary fame over and over again, as though the key to some enigma were there and might escape any but

the most patient and microscopic scrutiny. Ultimately he tossed the dingy and disfigured manuscript back into its corner with something between a sigh and a groan, rose from his seat, and began pacing the narrow parlour in a mood sadly at variance with the bright July sunshine which was flooding the Holbury landscape without, and would also have made this room a very palace of the enchanter but for Mrs. Cringle's solicitude for the glories of her carpets and curtains.

"Making practice square with precept has always been an awkward task in this world, I suppose," he soliloquised bitterly. "I fancy there have been a good many failures in that line up to now. I didn't think that paragraph yonder was ever going to have a direct and individual message for me—for its writer! But it is so. I scribbled it jauntily enough. I recollect the very day and hour. And I believed then every syllable I put upon the paper. The question is, do I *now* believe them? and am I prepared to act up to the conviction?"

He paused both in his monologue and in his slow turning to and fro on the line of frayed oil-cloth. He was regarding, half whimsically, the full-length portrait of himself that confronted him in the opposite mirror. He beheld there a tall, well-built young fellow of, perhaps, six-and-twenty, with features that would have passed as handsome even with a jury of fastidious critics of his own sex. He was noting, sardonically,