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A steam voyage up the Rhine

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Part VIII.

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PART VIII.

THE WANDERING CHRISTIAN.

PECOPIN wandered long in various countries; to relate his travels in detail, would be too much. He journeyed sometimes with naked feet, sometimes in sandals, sometimes upon an ass, a zebra, mule, camel, or elephant. He sailed everywhere, in all kinds of ships; the round vessels of the ocean, and the long ones of the Mediterranean; *oneraria et remigia*; galley, frigate, felucca, polacca, and canoe, bark, and yacht. He ventured into the Indian galleys of Bantam, and the hide-covered craft of the Euphrates, mentioned by Herodotus. He was rocked by every wind—the Levant, sirocco, and the sirocco mezzogiorno, the tramontano, and the monsoon. He journeyed through Persia, Peru, Bramaz, Tagatai, Transiana, Sagistan, and the Hasubi. He saw Monomotapa, like Vincent le Blanc; Sofala, like Pedro Ordenez; Ormus, like Fines; the savages, like Acosta; and the giants, like Malherbe de Vitre. He lost four of his toes in the desert, like Jerome Costilla. Like Mendez Pinto, he was sold seventeen times; was a galley-slave like Texeus, and had nearly shared the fate of Parisol. He suffered the plague of the scurvy, so fatal to the negroes; and sea-sickness, to which Cicero declared death was preferable. He clambered mountains so

high, that upon reaching their summits he vomited blood. He made the island, which, when sought, is never found, and pronounced its inhabitants to be good christians. In Midelpalia, which is northward, he remarked an isolated castle in a place where there could be none; still the illusions of the northern regions are so miraculous, that travellers should never be astonished. He dwelt several months with the King of Mogor Ekebas, made much of that prince, of whose court he related all which has since been written by the Dutch, English, and the holy Jesuits. He became learned, thanks to the great agents, adversity and travel. He studied the butterflies, and flowers of all climates, observed the winds by the migrations of birds, and the currents by the migrations of the cephalopodes. In the submarine regions, he saw the passage of the *ommastrephes sagittatus*, going towards the north pole, and the *ommastrephes giganteus* going towards the south. He saw monstrous men and monstrous monsters, like Ulysses of old. He made acquaintance with all the wonderful brutes, the sea-cow, the royl, the solan goose, the sea-vulture, the adjutant, the emu, the albatross, the capercailzie of Scotland, the fish manares which has the head of an ox, the bird chaki, which grows out of decayed wood; and the boranet, or animal plant of Tâtary, which has a root in the earth, and browses on the grass round its own feet.

He killed a sea triton of the *yapiara* sort, and inspired with a tender passion a triton of the genus *Baëpapina*. One day, being in the island of Manar, about two hundred leagues from Goa, he

was hailed by fishermen, who shewed him seven men-bishops, and nine sirens taken in their nets. He heard the anvil of the sea forge, and partook of the hundred and fifty-two kinds of fish which are in the sea, and which were seen in the miraculous draught of the apostles.

In Scythia, he killed a griffin, against whom the Arimaspes waged war to lay hold of the gold he guarded. This tribe would fain have made him their king, but he fled in disgust. Lastly, he was all but wrecked near Cape Gardafû, called by the ancients *Promontorium aromatorum*; and amidst so many adventures, dangers, fatigues, feats, and miseries, our knight Pecopin had but a single object, to make his way to Germany—one hope, to return to Falkenberg—one desire, that of once more beholding his beloved Bauldour.

Thanks to his talisman, he could neither grow old nor die; which was a great comfort. Yet he counted the years, for, at the time he reached the frontier of France, five years had elapsed since he had seen Bauldour. Sometimes, towards evening, his spirits would fail; when, having journeyed since morning, he used to sit down by the wayside and melt into tears.

After all this, however, he cheered up again, saying, "What are five years? I shall soon see her again! She was then fifteen, and is now only twenty."

Though in tatters, and his naked feet bleeding and wayworn, he gaily summoned up his strength, and journeyed on till he reached the mountains of the Vosges—the threshold of his native land.