

# A Woman's Journey Round the World

Ida Pfeiffer

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A WOMAN'S JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD, from Vienna to Brazil, Chili, Tahiti, China, Hindostan, Persia, and Asia Minor.

BY IDA PFEIFFER.

An unabridged translation from the German.

PREFACE.

I have been called, in many of the public journals, a "professed tourist;" but I am sorry to say that I have no title to the appellation in its usual sense. On the one hand I possess too little wit and humour to render my writings amusing; and, on the other, too little knowledge to judge rightly of what I have gone through. The only gift to which I can lay claim is that of

narrating in a simple manner the different scenes in which I have played a part, and the different objects I have beheld; if I ever pronounce an opinion, I do so merely on my own personal experience.

Many will perhaps believe that I undertook so long a journey from vanity. I can only say in answer to this--whoever thinks so should make such a trip himself, in order to gain the conviction, that nothing but a natural wish for travel, a boundless desire of acquiring knowledge, could ever enable a person to overcome the hardships, privations, and dangers to which I have been exposed.

In exactly the same manner as the artist feels an invincible desire to paint, and the poet to give free course to his thoughts, so was I hurried away with an unconquerable wish to see the world. In my youth I dreamed of travelling--in my old age I find amusement in reflecting on what I have beheld.

The public received very favourably my plain unvarnished account of "A Voyage to the Holy Land, and to Iceland and Scandinavia." Emboldened by their kindness, I once more step forward with the journal of my last and most considerable voyage, and I shall feel content if the narration of my adventures procures for my readers only a portion of the immense fund of pleasure derived from the voyage by

#### THE AUTHORESS.

Vienna, March 16, 1850.

With the hope that we may forward the views of the authoress, and be the means of exciting the public attention to her position and wants, we append the following statement by Mr. A. Petermann, which appeared in the Athenaeum of the 6th of December, 1851:

"Madame Pfeiffer came to London last April, with the intention of undertaking a fresh journey; her love of travelling appearing not only unabated, but even augmented by the success of her journey round the world. She had planned, as her fourth undertaking, a journey to some of those portions of the globe which she had not yet visited--namely, Australia and the islands of the Asiatic Archipelago; intending to proceed thither by the usual route round the Cape. Her purpose was, however, changed while in London. The recently discovered Lake Ngami, in Southern Africa, and the interesting region to the north, towards the equator--the reflection how successfully she had travelled among savage tribes, where armed men hesitated to penetrate, how well she had borne alike the cold of Iceland and the heat of Babylonia--and lastly, the suggestion that she might be destined to raise the veil from some of the totally unknown portions of the interior of Africa--made her determine on stopping at the Cape, and trying to proceed thence, if possible, northwards into the equatorial regions of the African Continent.

"Madame Pfeiffer left for the Cape, on the 22nd of May last, in a sailing vessel--her usual mode of travelling by sea, steamboats being too expensive. She arrived safely at Cape Town on the 11th of August, as I learned from a letter which I received from her last week, dated the 20th of August. From that letter the following are extracts:--

"The impression which this place (Cape Town) made on me, was not an agreeable one. The mountains surrounding the town are bare, the town itself (London being still fresh in my recollection) resembles a village. The houses are of only one story, with terraces instead

of roofs. From the deck of the vessel a single tree was visible, standing on a hill. In short, on my arrival I was at once much disappointed, and this disappointment rather increases than otherwise. In the town the European mode of living is entirely prevalent--more so than in any other place abroad that I have seen. I have made a good many inquiries as to travelling into the interior; and have been, throughout, assured that the natives are everywhere kindly disposed to travellers, and that as a woman I should be able to penetrate much farther than a man,--and I have been strongly advised to undertake a journey as far as the unknown lakes, and even beyond. Still, with all these splendid prospects and hopes, I fear I shall travel less in this country than in any other. Here, the first thing you are told is, that you must purchase waggons, oxen, horses, asses,--hire expensive guides, etc., etc. How far should I reach in this way with my 100 pounds sterling? I will give you an example of the charges in this country:--for the carriage of my little luggage to my lodgings I had to pay 10s. 6d.! I had previously landed in what I thought the most expensive places in the world--London, Calcutta, Canton, etc.--had everywhere a much greater distance to go from the vessel to my lodgings, and nowhere had I paid half of what they charged me here. Board and lodging I have also found very dear. Fortunately, I have been very kindly received into the house of Mr. Thaewitzer, the Hamburgh consul, where I live, very agreeably, but do not much advance the object which brought me here. I shall, in the course of the month, undertake a short journey with some Dutch boers to Klein Williams; and I fear that this will form the beginning and the end of my travels in this country.'

"From these extracts it will be seen that the resolute lady has at her command but very slender means for the performance of her journeys. The sum of 100 pounds, which was granted to her by the Austrian government, forms the whole of her funds. Private resources she has none. It took her twenty years to save enough money to perform her first journey!--namely, that to the Holy Land. While in London, she received scarcely any encouragement; and her works were not appreciated by the public, or indeed known, till she had left this country. It is to be regretted that the want of a little pecuniary assistance should deter the enterprising lady from carrying out her projected journey in Southern Africa. Though not a scientific traveller, she is a faithful recorder of what she sees and hears; and she is prepared to note the bearings and distances of the journey, make meteorological observations, and keep a careful diary--so that the results of her projected journey would perhaps be of as much interest as those of other travellers of greater pretensions."

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CHAPTER I. THE VOYAGE TO THE BRAZILS.

DEPARTURE FROM VIENNA--STAY IN HAMBURGH--STEAMERS AND SAILING VESSELS--DEPARTURE FROM HAMBURGH--CUXHAVEN--THE BRITISH CHANNEL--FLYING-FISH--THE PHISOLIDA--CONSTELLATIONS--PASSING THE LINE--THE "VAMPEROS"--A GALE AND STORM--CAPE FRIO--ARRIVAL IN THE PORT OF RIO JANEIRO.

On the first of May, 1846, I left Vienna, and, with the exception of slight stoppages at Prague, Dresden, and Leipsic, proceeded directly to Hamburgh, there to embark for the Brazils. In Prague I had the pleasure of meeting Count Berchthold, who had accompanied me during a portion of my journey in the East. He informed me that he should like to be my companion in the voyage to the Brazils, and I promised to wait for him in Hamburgh.

I had a second most interesting meeting on the steamer from Prague to Dresden, namely, with the widow of Professor Mikan. In the year 1817, this lady had, on the occasion of the marriage of the Austrian Princess Leopaldine with Don Pedro I., followed her husband to the Brazils, and afterwards made with him a scientific journey into the interior of the country.

I had often heard this lady's name mentioned, and my joy at making her personal acquaintance was very great. In the kindest and most

amiable manner she communicated to me the results of her long experience, and added advice and rules of conduct, which proved afterwards highly useful.

I arrived in Hamburg on the 12th of May; and, as early as the 13th, might have embarked on board a fine fast-sailing brig, which, besides, was christened the "Ida," like myself. With a heavy heart I saw this fine vessel set sail. I was obliged to remain behind, as I had promised my travelling companion to await his arrival. Week after week elapsed, with nothing but the fact of my staying with my relatives to lighten the dreariness of suspense; at last, about the middle of June, the Count came, and shortly afterwards we found a vessel--a Danish brig, the "Caroline," Captain Bock, bound for Rio Janeiro.

I had now before me a long voyage, which could not be made under two months at the least, and which, possibly, might last three or four. Luckily I had already lived for a considerable period on board sailing vessels during my former travels, and was therefore acquainted with their arrangements, which are very different from those of steamers. On board a steamer everything is agreeable and luxurious; the vessel pursues her rapid course independent of the wind, and the passengers enjoy good and fresh provisions, spacious cabins, and excellent society.

In sailing vessels all this is very different, as, with the exception of the large East Indiamen, they are not fitted up for passengers. In them the cargo is looked upon as the principal thing, and in the eyes of the crew passengers are a troublesome addition, whose comfort is generally very little studied. The captain is the only person who takes any interest in them, since a third or even the half of the passage-money falls to his share.

The space, too, is so confined, that you can hardly turn yourself round in the sleeping cabins, while it is quite impossible to stand upright in the berths. Besides this, the motion of a sailing vessel is much stronger than that of a steamer; on the latter, however, many affirm that the eternal vibration, and the disagreeable odour of the oil and coals, are totally insupportable. For my own part, I never found this to be the case; it certainly is unpleasant, but much easier to bear than the many inconveniences always existing on board a sailing vessel. The passenger is there a complete slave to every whim or caprice of the captain, who is an absolute sovereign and holds uncontrolled sway over everything. Even the food depends upon his generosity, and although it is generally not absolutely bad, in the best instances, it is not equal to that on board a steamer.

The following form the ordinary diet: tea and coffee without milk, bacon and junk, soup made with pease or cabbage, potatoes, hard dumplings, salted cod, and ship-biscuit. On rare occasions, ham, eggs, fish, pancakes, or even skinny fowls, are served out. It is very seldom, in small ships, that bread can be procured.

To render the living more palatable, especially on a long voyage, passengers would do well to take with them a few additions to the ship's fare. The most suitable are: portable soup and captain's biscuit--both of which should be kept in tin canisters to preserve them from mouldiness and insects--a good quantity of eggs, which, when the vessel is bound for a southern climate, should first be dipped in strong lime-water or packed in coal-dust; rice, potatoes, sugar, butter, and all the ingredients for making sangaree and potato-salad, the former being very strengthening and the latter very cooling. I would strongly recommend those who have children with them to take a goat as well.

As regards wine, passengers should take especial care to ask the captain whether this is included in the passage-money, otherwise it will have to be purchased from him at a very high rate.

There are also other objects which must not be forgotten, and above all a mattress, bolster, and counterpane, as the berths are generally unfurnished. These can be purchased very cheaply in any seaport town.

Besides this, it is likewise advisable to take a stock of coloured linen. The office of washerwoman is filled by a sailor, so that it may easily be imagined that the linen does not return from the wash in the best possible condition.

When the sailors are employed in shifting the sails, great care must be taken to avoid injury by the falling of any of the ropes. But all these inconveniences are comparatively trifling; the greatest amount of annoyance begins towards the end of the voyage. The captain's mistress is his ship. At sea he allows her to wear an easy negligé, but in port she must appear in full dress. Not a sign of the long voyage, of the storms, of the glowing heat she has suffered, must be visible. Then begins an incessant hammering, planing, and sawing; every flaw, every crack or injury is made good, and, to wind up, the whole vessel is painted afresh. The worst of all, however, is the hammering when the cracks in the deck are being repaired and filled up with pitch. This is almost unbearable.

But enough of annoyances. I have described them merely to prepare, in some degree, those who have never been to sea. Persons residing in sea-port towns do not, perhaps, stand in need of this, for they hear these matters mentioned every day; but such is not the case with us poor souls, who have lived all our lives in inland cities. Very often we hardly know how a steamer or a sailing vessel looks, much less the mode of life on board them. I speak from experience, and know too well what I myself suffered on my first voyage, simply because, not having been warned beforehand, I took nothing with me save a small stock of linen and clothes.

At present I will proceed with the progress of my voyage. We embarked on the evening of the 28th of June, and weighed anchor before daybreak of the 29th. The voyage did not commence in any very encouraging manner; we had very little, in fact almost no wind at all, and compared to us every pedestrian appeared to be running a race: we made the nine miles to Blankenese in seven hours.

Luckily the slow rate at which we proceeded was not so disagreeable, as, at first, for a considerable period we beheld the magnificent port, and afterwards could admire, on the Holstein side, the beautiful country houses of the rich Hamburgers, situated upon charming eminences and surrounded by lovely gardens. The opposite side, belonging to Hanover, is as flat and monotonous as the other is beautiful. About here the Elbe, in many places, is from three to four miles broad.

Before reaching Blankenese the ships take in their stock of water from the Elbe. This water, although of a dirty and thick appearance, is said to possess the valuable quality of resisting putridity for years.

We did not reach Gluckstadt (37 miles from Hamburg) before the morning of the 30th. As there was not now a breath of wind, we were entirely at the mercy of the stream, and began drifting back. The captain, therefore, ordered the men to cast anchor, and profited by the leisure thus forced upon him to have the chests and boxes made

fast on the deck and in the hold. We idlers had permission granted us to land and visit the town, in which, however, we found but little to admire.

There were eight passengers on board. The four cabin places were taken by Count B--, myself, and two young people who hoped to make their fortune sooner in the Brazils than in Europe. The price of a passage in the first cabin was 100 dollars (20 pounds 16s. 8d.), and in the steerage 50 dollars (10 pounds 8s. 4d.).

In the steerage, besides two worthy tradesmen, was a poor old woman who was going, in compliance with the wish of her only son, who had settled in the Brazils, to join him there, and a married woman whose husband had been working as a tailor for the last six years in Rio Janeiro. People soon become acquainted on board ship, and generally endeavour to agree as well as possible, in order to render the monotony of a long voyage at all supportable.

On the 1st of July we again set sail in rather stormy weather. We made a few miles, but were soon obliged to cast anchor once more. The Elbe is here so wide, that we could hardly see its banks, and the swell so strong, that sea-sickness began to manifest itself among our company. On the 2nd of July, we again attempted to weigh anchor, but with no better success than the day before. Towards evening we saw some dolphins, called also tummler, or tumblers, as well as several gulls, which announced to us that we were fast nearing the sea.

A great many vessels passed quickly by us. Ah! they could turn to account the storm and wind which swelled out their sails, and drove them rapidly towards the neighbouring port. We grudged them their good fortune; and perhaps we had to thank this specimen of Christian love on our part, that on the 3rd of July, we had not got further than Cuxhaven, seventy-four miles from Hamburg.

The 4th of July was a beautifully fine day, for those who could remain quietly on shore; but for those on board ship it was bad enough, as there was not the slightest breath of wind stirring. To get rid of our lamentations, the captain launched out in praises of the charming little town, and had us conveyed to land. We visited the town, as well as the bathing establishment and the lighthouse, and afterwards actually proceeded as far as a place called the "Bush," where, as we were told, we should find a great abundance of strawberries. After wandering about, over fields and meadows, for a good hour in the glowing heat, we found the Bush, it is true, but instead of strawberries, discovered only frogs and adders there.

We now proceeded into the scanty wood, where we saw about twenty tents erected. A bustling landlord came up, and offering us some glasses of bad milk, said that every year a fair is held in the Bush for three weeks, or rather, on three successive Sundays, for during the week days the booths are closed. The landlady also came tripping towards us, and invited us, in a very friendly manner, to spend the next Sunday with them. She assured us that we should "amuse ourselves charmingly;" that we elder members of the company should find entertainment in the wonderful performances of the tumblers and jugglers, and the younger gentlemen find spruce young girls for partners in the dance.

We expressed ourselves much pleased at this invitation, promised to be sure to come, and then extended our walk to Ritzebuttel, where we admired a small castle and a miniature park.

5th July. Nothing is so changeable as the weather: yesterday we were revelling in sunshine, and today we were surrounded by a thick,

dark fog; and yet this, bad as it was, we found more agreeable than the fine weather of the day before, for a slight breeze sprang up, and at nine o'clock in the morning, we heard the rattling of the capstan, as the anchor was being weighed. In consequence of this, the young people were obliged to give up the idea of an excursion to the Bush, and defer all dancing with pretty girls until their arrival in another hemisphere, for it was fated that they should not set foot in Europe again.

The transition from the Elbe to the North Sea is scarcely perceptible, as the Elbe is not divided into different channels, but is eight or ten miles broad at its mouth. It almost forms a small sea of itself, and has even the green hue of one. We were, consequently, very much surprised, on hearing the captain exclaim, in a joyful tone, "We are out of the river at last." We imagined that we had long since been sailing upon the wide ocean.

In the afternoon, we bore in sight of the island of Heligoland, which belongs to the English, and presented really a magical appearance, as it rose out from the sea. It is a barren, colossal rock; and had I not learned, from one of the newest works on geography, that it was peopled by about 2,500 souls, I should have supposed the whole island to have been uninhabited. On three sides, the cliffs rise so precipitously from the waves, that all access is impossible.

We sailed by the place at a considerable distance, and saw only the towers of the church and lighthouse, in addition to the so-called "Monk," a solitary, perpendicular rock, that is separated from the main body, between which and it there sparkles a small strip of sea.

The inhabitants are very poor. The only sources of their livelihood are fishing and bathing visitors. A great number of the latter come every year, as the bathing, on account of the extraordinary swell, is reckoned extremely efficacious. Unfortunately, great fears are entertained that this watering-place cannot exist much longer, as every year the island decreases in size, from the continual falling away of large masses of rock, so that some day the whole place may disappear into the sea.

From the 5th to the 10th of July, we had continued stormy and cold weather, with a heavy sea, and great rolling of the ship. All we poor "land-lubbers" were suffering from sea sickness. We first entered the British Channel, also called "La Manche" (420 miles from Cuxhaven) in the night of the 10-11th.

We awaited with impatience the rising of the sun, which would display to our gaze two of the mightiest powers in Europe. Luckily, the day was fine and clear, and the two kingdoms lay before us, in such magnificence and proximity, that the beholder was almost inclined to believe that a sister people inhabited both countries.

On the coast of England, we saw the North Foreland, the Castle of Sandown, and the town of Deal, stretching out at the foot of the cliffs, which extend for many miles, and are about 150 feet high. Further on, we came in sight of the South Foreland; and lastly, the ancient castle of Dover, that sits right bravely enthroned upon an eminence, and overlooks the surrounding country, far and wide. The town itself lies upon the sea-shore.

Opposite Dover, at the narrowest part of the channel, we distinguished, on the French coast, Cape Grisnez, where Napoleon erected a small building, in order, it is said, to be at least able to see England; and, further on, the obelisk raised in memory of the camp at Boulogne, by Napoleon, but completed under Louis Philippe.



The wind being unfavourable, we were obliged, during the night, to tack in the neighbourhood of Dover. The great darkness which covered both land and sea rendered this manœuvre a very dangerous one; firstly, on account of the proximity of the coast; and, secondly, on account of the number of vessels passing up and down the channel. To avoid a collision, we hung out a lantern on the foremast, while, from time to time, a torch was lighted, and held over the side, and the bell frequently kept sounding: all very alarming occurrences to a person unused to the sea.

For fourteen days were we prisoners in the 360 miles of the Channel, remaining very often two or three days, as if spell-bound, in the same place, while we were frequently obliged to cruise for whole days to make merely a few miles; and near Start we were overtaken by a tolerably violent storm. During the night I was suddenly called upon deck. I imagined that some misfortune had happened, and hastily throwing a few clothes on, hurried up--to enjoy the astonishing spectacle of a "sea-fire." In the wake of the vessel I beheld a streak of fire so strong that it would have been easy to read by its light; the water round the ship looked like a glowing stream of lava, and every wave, as it rose up, threw out sparks of fire. The track of the fish was surrounded by dazzling inimitable brilliancy, and far and wide everything was one dazzling coruscation.

This extraordinary illumination of the sea is of very unfrequent occurrence, and rarely happens after long-continued, violent storms. The captain told me that he had never yet beheld the sea so lighted up. For my part, I shall never forget the sight.

A second, and hardly less beautiful, spectacle came under our observation at another time, when, after a storm, the clouds, gilt by the rays of the sun, were reflected as in a mirror on the bosom of the sea. They glittered and shone with an intensity of colour which surpassed even those of the rainbow.

We had full leisure to contemplate Eddystone Lighthouse, which is the most celebrated building of the kind in Europe, as we were cruising about for two days in sight of it. Its height, and the boldness and strength with which it is built, are truly wonderful; but still more wonderful is its position upon a dangerous reef, situated ten miles from the coast; at a distance, it seems to be founded in the sea itself.

We often sailed so near the coast of Cornwall, that not only could we plainly perceive every village, but even the people in the streets and in the open country. The land is hilly and luxuriant, and appears carefully cultivated.

During the whole time of our cruising in the Channel, the temperature was cold and raw, the thermometer seldom being higher than 65 to 75 degrees Fah.

At last, on the 24th of July, we came to the end of the Channel, and attained the open sea; the wind was tolerably favourable, and on the 2nd of August we were off Gibraltar, where we were becalmed for twenty-four hours. The captain threw several pieces of white crockeryware, as well as a number of large bones overboard, to show how beautifully green such objects appeared as they slowly sank down beneath the sea; of course this can only be seen in a perfect calm.

In the evening we were greatly delighted by numbers of moluscae shining through the water; they looked exactly like so many floating stars, about the size of a man's hand; even by day we could perceive

them beneath the waves. They are of a brownish red, and in form resemble a toadstool; many had a thick pedicle, somewhat fimbriated on the under part; others, instead of the pedicle, had a number of threads hanging down from them.

4th August. This was the first day that it was announced by the heat that we were in a southern latitude; but, as was also the case the following day, the clear dark blue sky that generally overarches the Mediterranean in such exceeding loveliness, was still wanting. We found, however, some slight compensation for this in the rising and setting of the sun, as these were often accompanied by unusual forms and colours of the clouds.

We were now off Morocco, and were fortunate enough today to perceive a great number of bonitos. Every one on board bestirred himself, and on every side fish hooks were cast overboard; unluckily only one bonito allowed himself to be entrapped by our friendly invitations; he made a dart at the bait, and his good-natured confidence procured us a fresh meal, of which we had long been deprived.

On the 5th of August we saw land for the first time for twelve days. The sun was rising as the little island of Porto Santo greeted our sight. It is formed of peaked mountains, which, by their shape, betray their volcanic origin. A few miles in advance of the island stands the beautiful Falcon Rock, like a sentinel upon the look-out. We sailed past Madeira (23 miles from Porto Santo) the same day, but unluckily at such a distance that we could only perceive the long mountain chains by which the island is intersected. Near Madeira lie the rocky Deserta Islands, which are reckoned as forming part of Africa.

Near these islands we passed a vessel running under reefed sails before the wind, whence the captain concluded that she was a cruiser looking after slavers.

On the 6th of August we beheld, for the first time, flying fish, but at such a distance that we could scarcely distinguish them.

On the 7th of August we neared the Canary Isles, but unfortunately, on account of the thick fog, we could not see them. We now caught the trade wind, that blows from the east, and is anxiously desired by all sailors.

In the night of the 9-10th we entered the tropics. We were now in daily expectation of greater heat and a clearer sky, but met with neither. The atmosphere was dull and hazy, and even in our own raw fatherland the sky could not have been so overcast, except upon some days in November. Every evening the clouds were piled upon one another in such a way that we were continually expecting to see a water-spout; it was generally not before midnight that the heavens would gradually clear up, and allow us to admire the beautiful and dazzling constellations of the South.

The captain told us that this was the fourteenth voyage he had made to the Brazils, during which time he had always found the heat very easily borne, and had never seen the sky otherwise than dull and lowering. He said that this was occasioned by the damp, unhealthy coast of Guinea, the ill effects of which were perceptible much further than where we then were, although the distance between us was 350 miles.

In the tropics the quick transition from day to night is already very perceptible; 35 or 40 minutes after the setting of the sun the deepest darkness reigns around. The difference in the length of day and night decreases more and more the nearer you approach the

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