

# Basic Detail Report

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**Title**

A Voyage to Melbourne in a Sailing Ship

**Date**

10 September 1881

**Primary Maker**

The Graphic

**Medium**

Ink on paper

**Dimensions**

Overall: 405 x 590 mm

**Name**

Engraving

**History**

CANVAS OR STEAM? Which do you prefer for a long voyage? Well, if you are in a terrible hurry to get to your destination, steam of course, because you run no risk of being hung up in the calms off the Equator. But if you are travelling for pleasure or for health (since nowadays many invalids go to the Antipodes) take the advice of the writer of these lines, who has tried both modes of conveyance, and decides in favour of canvas. Canvas possesses several negative advantages; the decks are clean instead of being gritty or grimy with coal-dust, nor are you troubled with the throbbing of the screw, the noise and movement of which is suggestive of a giant imprisoned beneath your feet, and struggling to burst forth. Then the knowledge that you are completely at the mercy of the wind for the length of the day's run makes you take a lively and wholesome interest in the weather. Again, on board a sailing-ship "strange things come up to look at you,-the monsters of the deep," much more often than they do on board a steamer, where the agitation caused by the screw frightens away timid creatures. You see "Portuguese men-of-war" spreading their purple sails ; turtles swimming O'er the surface of the ocean as carelessly and unconcernedly as if there were no aldermen in the world; dolphins who gambol familiarly around the bows like the ragged boys who keep pace with omnibuses, throwing somersaults the while. Then it is worth while being becalmed, if only for the pleasure of welcoming the long-wished-for breeze when it does ripple the oily surface of the sea. Besides, during these calms, if the skipper is amiable, he allows a boat to be lowered, and you enjoy a swim in the tepid waters. Don't you wish it was as warm at Ramsgate or Scarborough, but don't you also prefer the chilly fluid of those popular resorts when the second officer shouts "Ware shark!" and you see a great ugly fin sticking above the surface? You think of the poor fellow in Hood's "Whims and Oddities," who, in reply to the inquiry from the vessel, "How are you?" replies "Only

middling," having in fact been bitten in two by a shark. So you swim as hard as ever you can, devoutly wishing yourself webb-handed and webb-footed, till you are safe on board the boat. Yes, dear reader, unless the captain is exceptionally grumpy, your fellow-passengers unaccountably disagreeable, or the weather abnormally bad, a long voyage by sailing-ship is something to look back upon with pleasure for the rest of one's life, besides that it is excellent physic for those whose brains or stomachs, or breathing pipes are out of order.