



# The Mediterranean Passion: Victorians and Edwardians in the South

*John Pemble*

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'The only remarkable thing people can tell of their doings these days is that they have stayed at home', declared George Eliot in 1869.

In Victorian and Edwardian Britain travel became the rage. The middle classes and the aristocracy seemed in a constant flux of arrival and departure, their luggage festooned with foreign labels. The revolution in transport made this possible. **The Mediterranean Passion** describes how the British travelled to the South and where they went. Drawing on what these travellers wrote, and what was written for them, it enriches our understanding of the Victorians and Edwardians by exploring the medical, religious, sexual and aesthetic dimensions of their journeys and illuminates an important but neglected aspect of British social and cultural history.

'... combines scholarship with charm ... It could easily be taken to the Mediterranean on a holiday and read with pleasure on a sunny beach or in the shade of a church.' Asa Briggs, *Financial Times*

'I was impressed not merely by the range of his erudition - historical, cultural, literary, topographical, medical et al. - and by the depth of his enquiries into his subject but by the subtlety and refinement of his prose. He deals with very elusive, complex and culturally contradictory matters, upon which few, if any, could arrive at persuasive generalisations; yet he does so throughout the book, while his conclusion is a marvel of judgment, excelling even what his preceded.' David Selbourne (author of *The Principle of Duty*)

**The Mediterranean Passion** was the joint winner of the 1987 Wolfson Literary Award for History.

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