

"HANDS ACROSS THE SEAS" 1914.

When the news of the safe arrival of our Canadian soldiers at Plymouth reached us the other day, it brought vividly to mind that sunny July afternoon, when we of that other "Overseas" contingent sailed gaily into Plymouth Sound.

Though war clouds had not then lowered, and ours was a mission of peace and pleasure, still it was a movement prompted by that spirit of imperialism, which has quickened our soldiers into action.

The Hon. Organizer, Mr. F. J. Ney, and the Hon. Chaplain, Dr. Crummy, were realizing a dream of Empire building, when together as definer and promoter they had worked out the "Hands Across The Seas" movement. This movement has made it possible for the rank and file of our teachers to visit the Mother Country under the happiest conditions, and to come in contact with those institutions and traditions that have made England great. Thus with a loyalty deepened and broadened, the teachers ought to become a greater inspiration to the youth of Overseas Dominions.

Of those first days of our pilgrimage one feels tempted to give a very minute account. From the tender that came out to meet us floated the strains of "The Maple Leaf Forever," and many and oft were the times it was played in our honour before we sailed for Canada. Our Newfoundland and New Zealand friends were not honoured in this way, and must have longed for their native airs.

As we passed two cruisers in the Sound our band struck up the National Anthem. Little did we then think that cruisers would be doing patrol duty for us on our return voyage, or that two would be sunk by the enemy on our very day of sailing.

Those days in "Glorious Devon!"—The Purser of "The Grampian" had said we would take Devon by storm, but in fact it was the other way about, and the invaders became the captives.

As we rode up from Plymouth to Torquay, our eyes, like the Kaiser's, became phosphorescent with happiness. The roses, the hedge-rows, the quaint stone houses, the vivid green of the cultivated fields, contrasting with the rich terra cotta of the newly ploughed, made a series of

moving pictures that will long delight our inward eye.

Torquay, the Italy of England, with its sub-tropical beauty, its geological interest and its hospitable people must have more than a passing notice. The garden party at Torre Abbey, the fine old seat of the Carys, was not the least of the many attractions arranged for our entertainment. Here we had our first entrance into one of the "Stately Homes of England." Colonel Cary had been in Canada with his regiment in 1861, and cherished a fond memory of Canadian kindness and hospitality.

In the beautiful dining room of the Abbey, once the Abbot's apartments, our attention was called to a full length portrait of the Colonel's only son, who lost his life during the Boer war, aged twenty-nine. In England one realizes the price of Empire.

A sail to Brixham, where William of Orange landed in 1681, was another feature of the Torquay programme. Here our overseas party landed in 1914, and had an official welcome from the chairman and the members of the district council, the school children being given a half holiday to mark the event, and to leave their teachers free to entertain their visitors.

It was while labouring at Brixham that the Rev. H. F. Lyte wrote his beautiful hymn, "Abide with Me." We visited his former home and were shown the original manuscript. Then in chorus we sang this hymn, that has been a solace to so many wayfarers.

From Torquay to Exeter, that ancient and loyal city, we travelled next. As in the play of "Richard III" the Mayor in courtesy showed us Rougemont, or what is left of it, entertaining us at a garden party in its beautiful grounds. The town clerk gave us a most interesting lecture on the historic Guild Hall, where we were also entertained. The Rev. Dean ciceroned us through the beautiful Cathedral, built in the 13th century, with its twin towers, built by the nephew of William the Norman, at a still more remote time. Exeter vibrates with history, and no one could be more conversant with it than the town clerk, who gave us so generously of his time and knowledge.

We had the privilege of visiting schools, here, which we also had at Oxford.

At one of the elementary schools, a girls'