

Massey's Illustrated

(PUBLISHED MONTHLY.)

A Journal of News and Literature for Royal Homes

New Series.]

TORONTO, CANADA, JULY, 1890.

[Vol. 2., No. 7.

ROUND THE WORLD,

A Run through the OCCIDENT, the ANTIPODES, and the ORIENT.

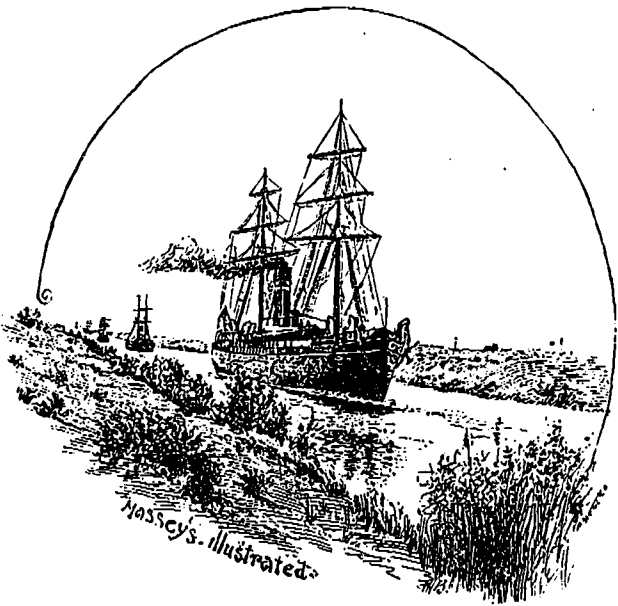
(Extracts from a series of letters written to the employes of the Massey Manufacturing Co. by W. E. H. MASSEY, Esq.)

HOME FROM THE ORIENT.

Twelfth and concluding Letter, dated Atlantic Ocean, homeward bound, S.S. Parisian, June 11th, 1888.

A SEAPORT town is never a very moral place, and Port Said, of all ports, is the worst I have ever chanced to visit. It cannot make the slightest pretension to morality, for it has none.

Unfortunately we had to wait there three days for the ship which was to take us onward, and our hearts were glad indeed, when we saw the gleaming electric search-light of the *Iberia* away in the distance, as she slowly came up the canal, though it



SCENE ON THE SUEZ CANAL.

Specially engraved for MASSEY'S ILLUSTRATED from a Photograph.

was at the undesirable hour of 2.30 a.m. when we went on board. The moon was at its full, and the night as clear as possible, and the scene at the entrance to the ever-busy canal was a pleasing one. There were men-of-war ships and steamships of every description lying at anchor or gliding gracefully along, having either just come through the great Suez Canal, or awaiting their turn to pass. The traffic through that very narrow thread of water connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, and so greatly shortening the passage between Europe and the Southern and Asiatic world, is almost incredible.

Now that electric light can be used, by the aid of the far-reaching "search-lights" of dazzling brilliancy, ships may pass through in safety by night as well as day. But even so, the capacity of the canal is not great enough, and a scheme of widening it, or even constructing a parallel canal—one for the up and the other for the down traffic—is being contemplated.

Once out in the Mediterranean and our big ship

began to toss—very gently at first, but steadily on the increase, and by evening things were decidedly uncomfortable. That night the wind increased in fury till it rocked about the *Iberia*—a ship of nearly 5,000 tons—in a manner quite surprising and tore the main try-sail into shreds. This was as we were passing "under Crete," and the violence of the waves in this inland sea called to mind the terrible experience of St Paul in these very same waters. (Acts, xxvii).

Next day brought us better weather, and shortly after noon the coast of Italy,—“the toe of the boot”—was in sight. A little later, and the outline of Mount Etna (10,800 feet above sea level) became visible, the smoke rising from its summit.

The Italian coast line was very plain but beautiful, as seen from our ship, and there were many lovely little villages cosily nestled on the steep hill-sides along the mountainous coast. Olive trees and vines were growing on the slopes. In the Straits of Messina the view was extremely pretty, with the charming Sicilian coast on one hand and that of Italy on the other, the sightseer's eyes were more than busy. Unbeknown we passed by the celebrated "Scylla and Charybdis," the terror of the ancients, but the water was as quiet as a river, and these famous whirlpools quite unnoticed. After leaving the Straits, the Islands of L'apari came into sight and remained within reach of our vision for several hours. Old Stromboli, particularly, elicited admiration. From the crater of this uniformly-shaped volcano, the mouth of which slopes slightly to the north, steam and smoke were rising in a cloud, and also from the hot stream of lava flowing down one side. At its base, close to the water's edge, was a pretty little village, al-

most lost to sight, it was so small in comparison with the mighty volcano. Dangerous quarters it seemed, for if Stromboli should suddenly become active, the inhabitants could not escape.

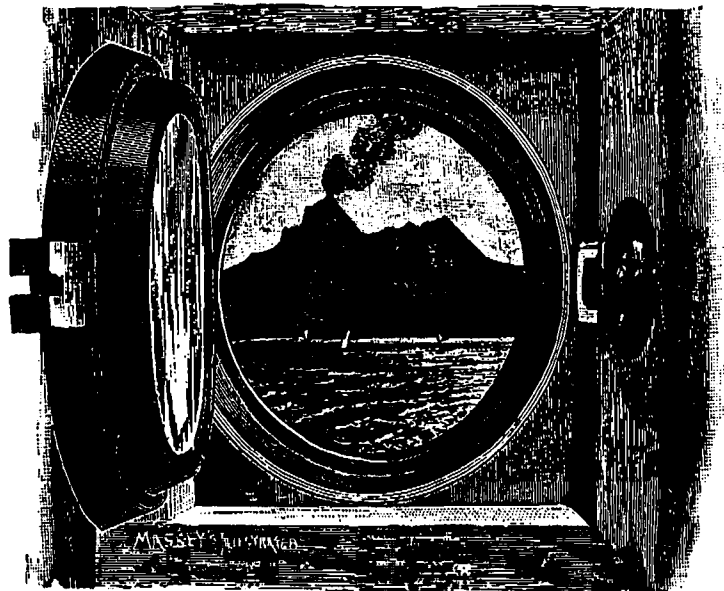
As this grand old mountain receded in the distance, in the twilight of that evening, the smoke lazily ascending from its summit, it formed a dreamy picture.

Long before daybreak next morning, the prow of the *Iberia* was turned into the far-famed Bay of Naples. The night was very dark, for it was cloudy, and as I looked upon Mount Vesuvius from the port in my stateroom, its black outline could be plainly distinguished against the sky, and the red glow, with occasional fire flashes, from its crater, was quite brilliant. A stream of

hot lava part way down its side also gave forth a red glow. The volcano had recently been more active than usual. Many of our passengers arose in the hope of witnessing a glorious sunrise, but were doomed to disappointment, for the clouds thickened and shut off the sun's rays entirely. However, the gradual dawn of daylight was in itself beautiful, the details of the landscape slowly coming into view.

The city of Naples, so prettily situated, its buildings extending around the shore of the Bay, the hills back of the city, and the wonderful volcano, form a scene of extraordinary grandeur, but I cannot say I think the Bay of Naples any more beautiful than some of the other magnificent harbors we had entered. An hour or so after breakfast time we weighed anchor and were again under way, the weather so hazy that the beauty of the islands we were passing was largely cut off from view. The following morning we sighted the coast of Sardinia in the distance; and the next day the Tunisian and Algerian coast was in view, and that evening, between us and the setting sun, the mountains of Spain were distinctly visible, though many, many miles away. The following noon we dropped anchor at Gibraltar for an hour or two, and had a splendid view of that grand old fortress as we approached it, and again as we were leaving. It is an imposing and very prominent rock. But very little of the fortifications can be seen.

Gibraltar is neither so bold nor so beautiful as the magnificent fortress of Aden. In the narrowest parts, the Straits are not more than 12 to 15 miles across. Here one can get an idea of the great commercial fleets passing in and out of the Mediterranean. At the outer entrance there were no less than 12 ships in sight at one time. The Bay of Biscay, so noted for ill behavior, was fortunately in a fairly calm mood, and we had good weather till within a day of Plymouth, when a heavy fog set in, which greatly delayed our progress, and made it difficult and dangerous navigating. So perfect are the equipments of modern ocean ships that one seldom hears of one becoming wrecked solely from bad weather; it is generally from collision in a dense fog. When a ship is veiled in a heavy mist and the keenest eyes cannot see her length ahead, nothing remains but to proceed slowly, and continually blow the fog horn or whistle, to apprise other ships, which may chance to be near, of her presence, and at best danger is imminent in regions where there is much commerce, or in paths of icebergs. Only prompt action and good management on the part of the



VIEW OF MOUNT VESUVIUS FROM STATE ROOM PORT HOLE.

Specially engraved for MASSEY'S ILLUSTRATED from a sketch by W. E. H. MASSEY, Esq.