

VOYAGE OF THE CANADIAN SCHOOL TEACHERS TO SOUTH AFRICA.

Miss Johnston Describes the Sights at Teneriffe and St Helena—They Get Into the Police Court—Through a Big Storm—Arrival at Cape Town.

Santiago, Africa, June 9.—That John the Baptist should be the chief topic of conversation after several hours spent ashore at Teneriffe seems rather a curious state of affairs. It all came about as a result of a visit to the fruit market. There were bought some small fruit that looked like crab-apples, and had from three to seven pits as large as cherry pits, which the natives called locusts (epelle, locusts). Everybody began to argue as to whether these were the things John the Baptist subsisted upon in the wilderness, or whether he ate grasshoppers. Anything does not start a conversation on board ship. Welcome is the person, fertile in suggestion, who can open a discussion. We were all inclined to the latter view, but our missionaries put us straight by giving us the Levitical law about what sort of small beasts were clean. Our missionary has spent 11 years in Central Africa, two weeks journey by sea from the railway. He is now taking his bride back there; she will be the only white English woman in that country. He has a brick house ready for her, the bricks he made with his own hands.

At first sight the island of Teneriffe looks like a cool, white cloud, then it shapes into a flimsy white bank; gradually it grows more distinct, and within four hours of sighting it we are dropping anchor in the harbor, under the shadow of jagged mountain tops. At the base of the mountains is the white, gleaming, Latin town of Santa Cruz, picturesque in its cleanliness from afar, and picturesque in its dirt near at hand. Terraces of fruit trees rise behind the town, setting off its whiteness.

After sailing for two days with only an occasional steamer in sight, the harbor of Santa Cruz is a busy place. A French training ship, a Spanish cruiser, several colliers and any number of small boats were anchored, while the boats were being buzzed around. From the minute we landed until we left it was one continued demand for pictures. Every little child seems to know English to the extent of saying "Penny, lady, give me penny, please." It isn't only the little children but all sorts and conditions of deformed creatures, hobbling about on their knees, with their misshapen feet carefully laid bare to attract sympathy and pence. They say if you pass a prison in Spain the prisoner will stick their heads out of the windows and beg for money.

Santa Cruz, Teneriffe, is truly Spanish. It has tiny narrow streets, paved with cobble stones; flat-roofed houses with railed balconies; not a veranda like we have all along one side, but a light-colored affair, just outside one window, a regulation Romeo and Juliette contrivance. In these balconies the children of the street sit, or seamy-faced Remedios old women, or perhaps a young mother held her child. Occasional electric trams light for the narrow streets, but a more numerous mode of conveyance is the little donkey. The middle section to be a big stumpy, the straw, thrown across the middle of the girls mounted and enjoyed (I) a ride. It was a funny sight to see the procession headed by our sergeant-major, in khaki and turned-up hat, his feet almost touching the ground.

Teachers Get Into the Police Court. All on account of those donkeys we got run in. The drivers were paid two or three times over, but the sergeant-major, so we were conducted into the police court. A lot of officials looked us over, and finally our interpreter told us those drivers wanted another sixpence. We produced the sixpence and moved on.

The cathedral is quite large. The doorway, under a fine Moorish tower, swarms with beggars; the walls are adorned with the usual pictures and altars. The guide told us the organ was English, and also flag he said was captured from Nelson. The main altar was silver. There is an inside chapel, with fine carved wood-work for marriages. The wedding party must stand over a tomb upon which is a death's head and "requiescat in pace" upon it. A lot of workmen were repairing the church. One of them came upon the altar. At his feet crouched his little daughter. She was a very little thing, and on that account had been given some pennies. The last we saw of her she was seated at the foot of the high altar, her head bent over her treasures, moving the coins gently from one hand to the other, looking more like a star than a living child.

From the glare of the streets the shops are a welcome change. They are small, almost little, shops. Lace, tobacco, silken shawls and drawn work seem to be the principal articles of barter. We all fell victim to the largest trade was in picture post cards. The kodak was abroad in the land. Women carrying big baskets on their heads, bundles of cards, the stazy looking policemen, all were snapped up. They tell us steamers stop at Teneriffe every day in the year. The trade of the place must be large, as every denier who goes ashore buys something, if only drinks. We took on a large quantity of coal. Big barges came alongside and the coal was hoisted up in sacks. There were a black looking lot of men who did the work. If I were a man, and free to choose my occupation, I should certainly grow to be a coal-heaver.

Teneriffe is quite a health resort for people who wish to avoid the English winter. Away up on the mountain side a large hotel, surrounded by a magnificent terraced garden. The peak was oozing, as mountain peaks are prone to be. She veiled her face in misty clouds in daytime, but as we left the setting sun outlined in tawny orange mountain masses as black as the storm swept sky. Life on board ship consists largely of cards, drinks, flirtations and stupidity, the mixture varying with the personal equation. One starts up with the intention of doing a lot of reading and fancy work; but it is difficult to read with people talking on all sides. Fancy work is equally difficult when the deck approaches an angle of 45 degrees to the water. Besique and cribbage flourish in the morning and bridge round nuptial card games, such as beating at night, flitting fourishes, to an abnormal degree on shipboard. It is curious to observe how little one becomes generally acquainted amongst a large number. The same little group play cards together or quots or sit chatting. Some people absorb information about other people's affairs and other people studiously avoid personalities. Some people are so easily pumped! The amount of conver-

sational power possessed by certain damsels is amazing. Whether they rest in their sleep one never knows but one hopes for the best. For the soldiers it is but fair to say they are remarkably well behaved. The drinking is very mild and they are very noisy. They have started a newspaper, the first copy of which netted more than three pounds for the Sailor's Orphans fund. They talk of generating a music service, intone the responses and sing well, as if they enjoyed it. Several of them were laid out by the heat, so crossing the line was not celebrated by any visit from Father Neptune.

For five days and nights the heat was like our most torrid weather in Fredericton. They said the thermometer registered only 85, but down below it must have been 15 degrees hotter, especially a couple of nights the people had to be closed. One night we were obliged to sleep on deck. The whole boat is under the shade of awnings. One result of that is that some of the most interesting situations will never be preserved to fame by means of camera.

As I am writing, the boat is rolling fiendishly. The noise of shifting sails and dishes is worse than any stage thunder storm. Every now and then something goes smash. The chair cushions are sliding all over the saloon floor. On deck, one is liable to go violently down in a heap if one tries to walk. The devoted swimmer who starts beside his lady's chair is hurled keelup against the rail. Every now and then a chair is upset and the occupant slides across the deck several times. It is wildly exciting. I assure you. I hope, when we have a real storm, we will be in a boat more deeply laden with cargo.

At St Helena. We arrived at St. Helena at noon on Sunday, May 25, and could not get ashore until 9 o'clock next morning. That was ample of official red tape. You can imagine our feelings, looking at the huge rock scarred with ravines, the little town of Jamestown just tacked into a ravine scarcely large enough to hold it, knowing that it would take three or four hours to get out to the burial place of Napoleon, and to be tossing idly in the harbor, not permitted to go ashore.

Some officers came out and told us the prospects were that peace would be signed next day. Our officers and men wondered if being at St. Helena would entitle them to their medals. Even they could not get ashore. All we could do was to grovel. No service was held in the morning, but in the evening there was a service of song which was well attended.

An English gentleman, the Dwarf, was on hand and had a pennant from the mast-head long enough to touch the water. When we did go ashore we were told we must not take our kodaks. There were walls and gnashing of teeth. We insisted on seeing the port regulation which states that there is a fine of £20 for taking pictures of the fortifications. Needless to say the kodaks went ashore and if any stray forts crept into the background of our pictures we did not take them on purpose.

Jamestown starts at the sea with a sea wall beaten with wild surf, a wall of most with bridge across it, fortifications of cream brick and everything quite military. The little street creeps up over the vine shaded with magnolias, palms and oleanders.

Boer Prison Camps. At the top is a small camp of Boer prisoners who work in the town. The hospital and a shop where all sorts of goods are sold, caps, rings, penholders, cigar and match boxes, candle boxes, small traps are made, ornamented with carved wood, all marked P. O. W. (Prisoners of War) St. Helena.

The Tomb of Napoleon. From the town the road goes back to the tomb of Napoleon, some four or five miles. These roads are most solidly constructed of masonry, cut along, or built out, on the mountain side. Past the tomb of Napoleon the road goes on to Deadwood Camp, an immense camp on the very top of the range. There are only a few tents, and a disgusted lot they were over it. They say the Boers are better fed than the guards. From the camp a road leads to the tomb of our ship for a chance meal it looked as if they had nothing to eat for months.

Jacob's Ladder, 700 steps, leads right up the hill to the garrison barracks, overlooking the harbor of Jamestown. We climbed up in the middle of a hot day, stopping often to puff and recover our breath, and arrived at the top nearly dead from the heat. There were 600 cases of enteric disease so we donned our selves with a sip of water. The road lies to the south back plan, two miles to the tomb. On one place is a solid pillar of masonry, supporting overhanging rock. Several years ago there was a rock slide, by which a number of houses were demolished and a dozen or more people killed.

IN CONFIDENCE.

"Oh, don't talk to me about dark girls," begged the red-haired young woman on the front seat, interrupting a story which the bus driver was about to tell her. Her head and her blue straw hat trembled with indignation. "If you had my experience you'd never give 'em another thought."

"A k at you," continued the young woman, bending forward; "you wouldn't talk so silly if you knew. Do you happen to be acquainted with any young lady of the name of Abrahams?"

"Driver could not say yes."

"Or a young gentleman by the name of Bird?"

"There again driver confessed he had to acknowledge a deficiency."

"Well," said the red-haired lady, with great appetite, "then there can be no arm in tellin' you all about it."

The driver counseled her to fire away.

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