

**Mr. J. MACDONALD OXLEY,**  
**B.A., LL.B.**

Mr. Oxley is a Bluenose by birth, the city of Halifax being his native place, and the date October 22, 1855.

Having been prepared at the Halifax Grammar School, he entered Dalhousie University, and graduated thence with honours in 1874. Two years later he took a course in Law at Harvard University, and on his return obtained the degree of LL.B. from the University of Halifax. In 1878 he was admitted to the Nova Scotia Bar, and was engaged in active practice until 1882, when he accepted a professional position in the Marine Department at Ottawa. This he resigned in 1892 to become Superintendent of Agencies for The Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada in the Eastern Canada district. In the following year he was promoted to his present position of Manager of the English Department of the Montreal District.

For many years, in addition to his other occupations, Mr. Oxley has given much attention to literary work, and has published nearly a score of books in England and the United States, besides contributing to the majority of the leading magazines. He has been the editor of *SUNSHINE* from its inception.

**DOTTINGS ROUND THE CIRCLE.**

No. I.

The revered and beloved President of The Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada is now upon his way around the globe, partly in quest of improved health, and partly in the interests of the Company, and *SUNSHINE* is privileged to give occasional extracts from his interesting letters received by the Secretary.

Sailing from England at the end of December in one of the floating palaces of

the P. & O. line the President reports progress through the Mediterranean—

"The mighty midland sea that moans with memories."

"The sun has just set—a truly glorious sight to see the great luminous orb go down seemingly lost in the vast deep!—and with him went the heat of day. What sensations the sight must have given to the first thoughtful man on earth!

"We are just losing sight of Majorca to the right. It has been in sight since 10 o'clock, and as we are sailing about 15½ miles an hour, it must be fully a hundred miles long. It was beautifully warm and sunny all day, but from the peculiar look of the Eastern sky I think we shall enter upon rain to-night. In the morning we should reach Marseilles.

"An hour ago quite a sensation was created on our side the hurricane deck by our hearing the bugle sound, and seeing the crew rush madly along the deck fastening the hose at various hydrants. There were coolies without shoes—some with ordinary ones,—others with noses turned up like snow-shoes, but more sharply curved; on their heads every kind of turban, and their bodies clad in such a variety of costumes and fabrics. But it was a false alarm—a mere matter of practice and discipline—a prelude to the roll-call which then took place. Every coolie has his number, and thus knows his place at muster.

"We anchored at Gibraltar, but did not go ashore. It was too early. Except from the South the Bay is both capacious and safe. Of course only the Eastern Peninsula is British, and it is a most peculiar looking concern—the natural heritage and property of Spain. It is bold and precipitous, honey-combed with caves and excavations, many of which are quite visible from the steamer's deck. Skirting the whole harbour is a strong, high wall with many embrasures, into which cannon may be put. Thus towards the harbour it is strongly fortified, but when one leaves the harbour and sails around the Cape, there is, apparently at least, not the first vestige of protection. It looks like a chalk or lime rock crumbling to dust, and colouring the water for hundreds of yards out. From summit to base its only resemblance is that of a lime quarry in operation—great heaps of fine dust held in check by shelly shelves. The summit has in one place at least lengthwise, become so worn away that the ridge is broken and the continuity interrupted, leaving a small bit of tableland to constitute the Spainward portion of the top. Of course there must be means of protection in readiness against a landing from the rear, else it would be what Quebec was, strong in front but vulnerable from the rear, as was shown by Wolfe and his tars.

"I could not help thinking of the difference between Montreal and our deck,—sitting, as many of us were, in May clothing, while you are wrapped in furs, and treading on snow and ice."