

JOHN R. REID, Esq.

Mr. Reid was born in the State of New York, in the year 1855, but came to Canada, during his early boyhood, with his father, who settled in Brockville. Here the subject of this sketch received a sound education in the public schools, where he won high honours. While still in his "teens" he had to strike out for himself, and began in a printing office. Thence he passed to the counting-room of an extensive produce dealer, and later on went into the Brockville Biscuit Works, of which he became the travelling representative. He remained with this concern until 1891, when he entered the service of The Sun Life of Canada as Special Agent in the Eastern Ontario District. About a year later he succeeded Mr. R. Junkin in the managership of this district, which important position he still occupies in an eminently satisfactory manner.

During his quarter-of-a-century residence in Brockville he filled several public offices—such as Secretary of the School-Board, Member of the Board of Education, Governor of the General Hospital, Secretary of the Board of Trade, &c.

At the age of 32 he was elected Grand Master of the Oddfellows of Ontario, being the youngest member thus honoured.

Since taking up his residence in Ottawa he has connected himself with the Masonic fraternity. He is also a member of the Board of Trade, and of the Central Canada Exhibition Committee. He is an elder in one of the Presbyterian Churches, and superintendent of a Sabbath School.

DOTTINGS ROUND THE CIRCLE.

No. II.

We give below some further extracts from the President's letters as he circumnavigates the globe:—

"Yesterday was a truly interesting one at Port Said. Most of the day was occupied taking

in coal. This is said to be one of the largest coaling stations in the world, and yet most of the coal comes from Wales. We went ashore, and strolled with an Egyptian guide through the town. The shops had some tin toys and gimcracks from England, but also some very beautiful shells with the rough exterior wholly removed, and the brilliant parts handsomely carved in every conceivable device, forming cameos. Some were as high in price as 40 shillings. The Chinese and Japanese things we did no more than cast a glance at, hoping to view them in their native land. The place was very clean and orderly—the market having bread and fruits and vegetables nicely arranged for sale, and the bare-legged bucksters ready to take a foreigner in.

"But the view in the harbour was unique! Boats innumerable, boys and men in every possible colour of costume, and the Arabs, crowding every available inch of sitting or standing room, being rowed either to or from the coal barges. They are the navvies, and in the harbour were steamers of all nations being coaled. These coal-handlers are clad in cotton fabrics, are bare to the knee, and have over their heads a coarse kind of sacking, while a yet coarser plaid stuff covers the neck and shoulders. A very different kind of dress from that we use, and which protects the feet and legs while simply covering the head.

"Well, the morning temperature could not have been above 50° F., but it is marvellous how the children of the desert rough it. They are all well-formed, muscular men, with regular fleshy caps on the shoulder. The young fellows who dive for sixpences while trembling every inch of them from cold, with a wet rag about their only half concealing their nakedness, would yet for hours be rowed around the ships, evading the native police, who forbid diving, as many fatalities from sharks have thus happened. Yet they would, whenever his highness's presence disappeared, yell out: 'I say, man—give shilling—I climb up and dive,' 'Come—come—I dive,' &c. These young fellows all showed a wonderful muscular development that would astonish the gymnasium people in Montreal. No sooner would they catch hold of the boat with one hand than the body was hoisted right into the boat with apparently no effort.

"Prince Henry of Germany landed yesterday from a large German war-ship while we were looking on. There were two German ships in port. This morning the one conveying the Prince anchored at Suez, just astern of us, but she is not in sight in the Gulf now."