

Topics of the Day

AT HOME.

AROUND THE WORLD.

BY WIDE AWAKE.

Some of us have friends now on their way round the world, and it is with pleasure that I ask our Young Canadians to take a few minutes trip with me to snatch a peep at the journey. On the twentieth of January they left Liverpool in the *Empress of India*; one of the three magnificent steamers that our Canadian Pacific Railway Company has built for the new mail route to China and Japan. It is the first time we have had a globe-circling tour of our own, and it ought to be a red letter day for our readers. Many distinguished Europeans are on board, and a host of Canadians are enjoying for the first time in their lives, and in Canadian steamers, the trip which is the height of the traveller's ambition, the end-all of his anticipations, until, with a Canadian Jules Verne, he may set out for a thirty day's journey around the moon.

Across the Bay of Biscay, with its fierce North West winds and sailors' nightmares, our friends will rest at Gibraltar, the great rocky promontory, standing up in the sea like a sentinel of marble. Of course all will land, though there is little to gladden the eye. Short and scanty vegetation; few trees; the rocks bristling with guns, with asparagus, capers, aloes, rabbits, partridges, pigeons, woodcock and apes, trying to hide in the crevices. Huge tanks to catch the rain are all the springs of water the people know. I think it is more for honour and ancient prestige that we cling to it, as it grows nothing, can't maintain itself in food, and by no means commands the Straits.

But now they are in the Mediterranean, the Between Sea, with its bright blue water, its green and purple bays and harbours, its coral fisheries, its stirring olden tales of war and commerce, its ancient Egyptian, Phoenician, Carthaginian, Greek and Roman trade, its sunny memories of rest and joy, of peace and song. At Naples they have the poetic sky, the salubrious air, the fertile soil, and grapes, olives, oranges, lemons, citrons, figs, dates, to their heart's content.

At Port Said they will land again. They will trip about in scenes well known; to Cairo with its narrow, crooked, dark streets, all unpaved, and purchase from its well-filled bazaars some presents for us when they return; gaze at the ancient minarets and mosques, and sit in the beautiful groves of orange, citron and palm. Those that are bookish will visit the University—the great seat of learning for the East. Then the Pyramids, one of the seven wonders of the world must be visited, huge structures, tombs of Egyptian monarchs, nobody knows what built for, though of course, everybody has been enquiring.

Meanwhile, to save time, the *Empress of India* waits at Suez, where our friends embark once more, at the northern end of the Gulf, a queer old place, with quaint bazaars revived into trade by the overland route to India. A few miles to the South they will see the spot where the children of Israel crossed in their memorable escape from Pharaoh. In the Red Sea they will know little of the dangers of navigation, the islands, the shoals, the coral reefs, the violent and unexpected winds; at

least let us hope so. In the Indian Ocean they will weary themselves counting the islands, the thousands, the tens of thousands, from Madagascar downwards. If they have friends in Bombay they should call their, to see its shawls, its opium, its coffee, its pepper, its ivory, its variety of gums; and before leaving they should ask about Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the merchant prince of fabulous wealth, faultless morals, and munificent patriotism.

At Ceylon, they want to stay a month,—a year with its forests of blossoms, its trees of rhododendron, its climbing plants; its mines of sapphires, rubies, topaz, garnet, amethyst, cinnamon stone; its gems of rare value and beauty; its fisheries of pearl. Across the Bay of Bengal they may meet the trade winds, or an occasional monsoon. In the delicious climate of the Straits of Malacca, they are in the region of rice, sago, pepper, fruits, vegetables, rattans, timbers, and tin. A few days at Singapore they will spend pleasantly among spices of every kind, tortoise shells, and gutta purchas. I hope they won't meet a tiger. They are dreadful on the island. Sometimes three hundred men disappear in one year, and nobody dares to ask the tiger any questions that he might resent. At Hongkong I hope they won't stay too long. It is hot and damp in summer, and cool and dry in winter, and not a very nice place for our Canadians. But of course they must see it, and study up its opium trade.

At Shanghai they will be in the chief maritime centre of China. They will see a poorly built town, with palatial residences for the wealthy; lots of temples, Chinese junks, and queer square rigged boats that will look funny to them. At Yokohama, with its granite piers and custom-houses, they will again be tempted to think of us at home. Lacquered work, bronzes, baskets, porcelains, fancy silks, embroideries, curios of all kinds are spread out in fascinating array. As they face the Pacific Ocean they are on their homeward journey. Curious how it got its name. It does not always deserve it. You may as soon have a hurricane, a monsoon, a typhoon (the terror of mariners in the Chinese Seas) white squalls, cyclones, tempestades, and all the rest of it, as a still and glassy pond. But it will be an experience for them. In travelling everything is experience. By Alaska you may be sure the ladies will look out for seals; but before they have time to decide whether they will have one for a museum or for a sacque, the matchless harbour of San Francisco is in sight, and all prepare to land. Back again to familiar scenes and familiar names, Vancouver, Victoria: they have enjoyed their trip; they have gone round the globe; they have seen the world; they have visited every imaginable climate; breathed every kind of air, and spoken (or ought to have spoken) every civilized language. And this at a cost of six hundred dollars. Those of us who could not go with them, may still do so. The *Empress of Japan* follows in a week or two, and again the *Empress of China*. Verily we bring the world to our very garden gate.

The Maritime Provinces offer exceptional opportunities to competent and energetic young farmers. In no part of this continent is fruit growing better understood or more successfully practised than in Nova Scotia. The magnificent apple orchards of the Annapolis valley stand, perhaps, unrivalled. Last year three hundred thousand barrels were exported, and it is expected that this year the quantity will exceed four hundred thousand.