

## CURRENT TOPICS AND EVENTS.

## HINTS TO PERSONS ABOUT TO TRAVEL.

Year by year the number of Canadian visitors to the old historic lands of Europe increases. We have been repeatedly asked to give such the benefit of our experience. We have pleasure, in response, in giving a few practical hints which may be of service to intending tourists.

In the first place, we would say, Form a definite idea of where you want to go,—form your plan, and keep to it. You will accomplish more, with greater comfort, by carrying out a pre-arranged programme, than by the happy-go-lucky way of deciding on your route as you go along, or being diverted by whim or caprice from your plan. This, of course, requires thought, and the study of maps and guide-books, but every hour thus given brings its full reward.

A word as to guide-books. It is poor economy to try to do without them. Many a one spends from five hundred to one thousand dollars in travel, who grudges five or ten dollars for guide-books. A good guide-book, well studied, will double the enjoyment and profit, and will save many times its cost. By far the best are Baedeker's. There are separate ones for London, Paris, Northern, Central, and Southern Italy (one for each), Switzerland, Holland and Belgium, the Rhine, Northern and Southern Germany, Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. They cost about \$1.50 each, except the last two, which cost \$4 and \$5 respectively. They are convenient pocket manuals, abounding in route-maps, plans of cities, picture galleries, etc., and give just the information a traveller wants,—hotel rates, railway and steamboat fares, cab, omnibus, street car, and gondola tariff; how much to give porters and local custodians, guides, etc.; besides, of course, historical and art information and criticism. They

tell you, even, which side or the railway car to sit to enjoy the view, and what pictures to study. We carried nine of them, and as soon as we were done with them sent them home by mail. They form a permanent library of reference. With these one can enter a strange city and find his hotel, and visit every object of interest without any trouble. In one railway carriage we have seen Baedeker's in three or four different languages, in use. They are constantly being revised, and the only mistake we discovered was the following: As we entered Rotterdam, a gentleman asked what hotel we were going to. We told him, and he asked permission to accompany us. We had no *impedimenta*, having left our luggage at Brussels, and set out, map in hand, to find the hotel, but on arriving at the place apparently shown on the plan, saw no sign of it. Strolling down the quay a few hundred yards, we came across it. "Has this hotel been removed," we asked; "how is it that Baedeker shows it just by the bridge?" "The hotel has not been moved," was the answer, "*but the bridge has.*" The next edition, however, would probably have the mistake corrected.

If Baedeker is too bulky, Murray is still more so, and Harper's guide-book is too clumsy—a big, bulky book. For a small book, Osgood's "Knapsack Guide" is decidedly the best, price \$2. Cook's Tourists' Guide, price \$1, is of little use. For England and Scotland, Black's Guide is the best, although Shaw's, smaller and cheaper guide, is also very good. Guide-books should be studied at home, or on shipboard, and the things you want to see marked. If you leave it till you are on the spot, you will be hurried and confused. We saw a couple of English girls on the top of a diligence, in one of the wildest passes of the Alps, desperately conning