

**WHEN YOU
GO TO
CANADA**

UNDER the Empire Air Training scheme many officers and airmen are going overseas.

So, perhaps it may be better to ask "why are you going to Canada?" before dealing with the "when."

The answer is fairly simple. The Empire is a Commonwealth of Nations, and individually we belong to the great family that Commonwealth embraces. Wherever we may have been born, we are kin. Each is contributing to the full in the war effort. Some things can be done more advantageously in one place; some in another.

Fully trained men command most of the resources available in Great Britain. These islands are the essential base for operational effort. There is neither sufficient free ground space nor free air space for training on the required scale. Nor, due to weather, can training be carried on so continuously as is necessary.

In the Dominions few of these hindrances exist. There is adequate space; there is a greater certainty of enduring good weather; there is no congestion in the air, and continuous training can be carried on.

This makes it possible to maintain the steady flow of pilots and crews necessary to man the increasing numbers of aircraft that are coming forward.

That, in the main, is the reason you are going to Canada instead of remaining in Great Britain. You are going so that you may more quickly play your part in the combined effort.

To make this possible, the various Dominions and other parts of the Empire

have contributed to an extent that is, perhaps, not fully comprehended.

In a remarkably short space of time, organisation has been perfected, aerodromes and training centres created and seemingly insurmountable hindrances overcome. The small peace-time Air Forces of the Dominions have been doubled and redoubled, and it has been necessary for instructors and maintenance personnel to be lent to them to build on the framework laid down by the Training Scheme.

Incidental to purely technical training, here is an added advantage; a wider personal scope. Belonging to an Empire as we do, every responsible traveller from one part of that Empire to another increases the sum of common knowledge, and his own store of experience. The transfer of personnel from one country to another should be, in fact, the transfer of so many unofficial but none the less valuable ambassadors. There is an opportunity beyond training in your voyage.

Now as to the "when" you go to Canada.

There are some practical matters to consider before the trooper puts out to sea, and the first (by almost general consent) is the question of finance.

PAY is now the same as that of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Official notes have given you the necessary details, but it is well to remember that emoluments are subject to British Income Tax.

The same notes deal fully with allowances and allotments to dependants.

It is essential that the official notes on these subjects should be read carefully, and arrangements made in accordance

with them. Have all this done beforehand. The drill is laid down, and if by carelessness or thoughtlessness proper arrangements are not made prior to departure, it is not the fault of the Administration; but your own.

Concerning kit there is very little to be said. Central heating is general in Canada, in one form or another. Ordinary kit is sufficient, although what is known as tropical kit is worn in the summer. Normal sports kit will suffice. There is no need to take a topee. If you want to take a dinner suit by way of evening dress, there may be occasion to wear it. (You may hear a dinner jacket called a "Tuxedo.") Many people use the name. It sounds strange at first, but is certainly no stranger than the French "smoking." Nobody smiles when the French refer to the "smoking." As a friendly word of advice, don't smile if some people use the word "Tuxedo."

Special kit should be bought on the spot. It is generally cheaper and better suited to conditions than that bought beforehand.

In general, restrain the knowing smile at all things strange. The Canadians have the ultimate right to their own mode of life, their slightly strange vocabulary, and their other differences. It will be you who are the stranger welcomed in the gates. What they do is the accepted thing. If your ideas differ from theirs, the best advice is: get used to them, and like it.

Go prepared to like all the odd changes, and you will speedily find your way into the cordial friendship that is awaiting you. Above all, don't tell the Canadians that "We don't do that in England . . . or Scotland . . . or Wales, or Northern Ireland." They won't like it (unless you have

sufficient immediate charm and disarming simplicity to get it "across"), any more than you would like implied criticism of your habits and customs in your own country.

THE VOYAGE. It is not a very long voyage; but you will probably find a certain amount of crowding, some seasickness, and orderly rush. There is a war on, so accommodation must be used to the full. Food will be ample and good; it is up to you (as the Canadians will certainly say) to make the best of it and to offer as little embarrassment as possible to hard-worked people who are running the outfit.

The days will be more easily borne than the nights. The ship will then be blacked out. Perhaps the Skipper may be emphatic. His job is to get you there in safety, and to preserve his ship for future use. Ships are vitally important to Great Britain. It is not likely that any "grinning and bearing it" will be necessary; but an honest smile makes things easier for you and for everybody else.

A fairly sound maxim in war time is to go abroad expecting a certain amount of discomfort. Go with that point of view and find yourself surprised at the small amount you really do have to suffer.

Among other discomforts, some of you must be prepared to find the sea disturbing. People are seasick quite unexpectedly. Even the stoutest sailors find that true. The Captain on the bridge may be sicker than some of his passengers; but he has to carry on through it, and does. Your servant or steward may equally be sick, and carry on. You yourself may be sick. At one moment you may be afraid the ship will go down because of the seas that are running, or the wind that is

blowing. The next moment, as Mark Twain said, you may be afraid it won't.

Seasickness gets those prone to it in just that way.

Unless duty keeps you on your feet, if you are seasick, lie down and close your eyes. Give your stomach something to work on—not solid food (anyway, seasickness will take care of that, so let us be cheerful); but simple liquids. Water is the best stuff for a queasy stomach to work on. Drink as much as you can when the thing hits you; if it does. It is better for the muscles to have something to show for the contractions they make. Don't take too much alcohol, either as a preventive or a cure.

Incidentally, if you are not a good sailor, you will notice a distinctly different flavour to beer and spirits for the first few days. An old sailor's advice is to give the cocktails a miss.

Get your stuff stowed away as quickly as you can when you get on board. Take advantage of the first few hours, when it is almost certain to be quiet sailing, to put your accommodation in order and to cause as little inconvenience to other people as you can. Either you or the other fellow may wish that advantage had been taken of those few hours that can be so precious.

If you are a hardened sailor, you will remember that a poor sailor likes least of all to be made to talk. Frankly, he just wants to be sick. And he usually is; so your words are going to be wasted anyway. Wait till he, too, is striding the deck for the usual four rounds before going down to meals—if there is a free passage for the walkers.

It is unnecessary to say "don't grumble," because you gave all grasped the deep significance of the effort the Empire is making. Some people may not seem to be doing all they might, but the majority is doing vastly more than was ever dreamed of. The cooks are hard worked; the stewards and servants; the officers; the sailors and the sweating engineers and engine room staff are all doing their bit to drive your good ship to port and a happy haven.

It may be on your mind that those at home are being left in the "front line" while you are travelling to comparative safety. True enough; but there is a real purpose behind your going. What is causing you some anxiety is causing them happiness. Balance the one against the other. Anxiety is proper enough, and hard to bear; but there is not only an Empire at stake in this war, there is the whole issue of freedom; after a course of training well done, your lot and the lot of those at home will be joined again, with you taking a bigger and more efficient share in the shaping of the future.

You arrive. Unless you have been in Canada before there is not the slightest doubt that a surprise is awaiting you. The "pace" of life is different. Dress differs in some hard-to-discover particulars. There is an air of speed everywhere. Even people who have no particular reason to be hurrying still seem to be in a hurry. Locomotives have bells and deep-throated whistles. They carry searchlights on the long runs, just as a car in peace time carries headlamps. And for the same reason. The driver likes to see his road. There may, even, be a cow on the line.

"Ice-cream" parlours "do good business" in North America consumes a vast quantity of soft drinks and ice-cream. Drug stores are not chemists' shops pure and simple. They usually have a "soda fountain." And there you can take your ice-cream sodas, or ice-creams and light refreshment. Which leads to the fact that the Canadians do, or certainly used to, make a lunch of ice-cream and a sandwich very frequently.

Meal times differ according to the Province and the size of the town or city. Breakfasts are hearty. There may even be a fried steak and hashed potatoes sometimes. Not our home way of doing it; but their way, and it has been found agreeable.

It is just as well to take what comes with a smiling good nature. Within a day or two the adaptable man will be wondering why the Canadian way was never tried at home. And that is precisely the attitude that your Canadian colleagues would respond to so swiftly as to be overwhelming. The good friend arrives quickly.

It may be worth remembering that all parts of the Empire, from the Mother Country and the great Dominions to the smallest island, are doing their share to ensure a happy issue out of the war. Canada has its problems of defence, is hard at work on munitions of all kinds, it is an important part of our larger, and at the same time is giving men for military service in all branches of the armed forces.

Consequently all Canadians are well aware that they are in the war alongside the other members of the family, and great sacrifices are being made by the people of the Dominion. Although friendship is

there for the making, perhaps it may be worth while remembering that Canada is getting on with the job, and the people will not have all the time in the world to make an excessive fuss of contingents from other places who are in their midst to be fitted for service.

The Dominion is wholeheartedly loyal to the Empire and the people are fiercely independent, properly jealous of their rights and privileges, their mode of life and their own point of view.

All this should be respected. No greater demands should be made on their tolerance than would be met if the position were reversed.

If you are strange to Canada, it is not unlikely that you will be treated as a "tenderfoot" for a while, and they will smile, even laugh, when some particularly marked mistake on your part is noticed. Still, we all went to school, and we all know what the new boy feels like. You will be the new boy, except that you will be treated not as a boy but as an equal, lacking special knowledge that can be obtained only by living among your colleagues. Go slowly.

Accustom yourself to distances that are commonplace to them. Canada is roughly three thousand miles wide. It is an ancient joke there that people from "home" (they often refer to Great Britain like that, very casually) think of running over to Moose Jaw from Montreal during the weekend because somebody has a cousin to be looked up. When slips like that happen, it is just as well to laugh with them at yourself.

The clear air makes for great visibility; things that are well out of reach seem

near, especially on the prairies. Trust the map and other mechanical aids rather than your own judgment.

Canadians are fond of saying that the Dominion has a climate, but Great Britain has only weather. Certainly weather is more continuously reliable, and extremes are greater. Winter is long and unbroken, temperatures go well below zero, yet the air is dry and it does seem to be true that young men from Great Britain resist the cold weather, for a while. It is very unwise to trust that feeling of indifference to cold. Get into the habit of looking at the thermometer, if you intend to steer clear of frostbite.

Frostbite develops rapidly, and attacks the exposed skin without much warning. Treat the possibility with respect, and if a well-intentioned passer-by suddenly stops you and begins to rub your ears with snow, treat him as a friend and not an enemy. The Canadian people recognise frostbite, and don't wait for an introduction before giving first aid.

Despite your "thicker blood," dress as the Canadians dress. As a rule, because they live in centrally heated houses, where the average temperature is higher than in English homes (and more even), they wear light-weight underclothing all the year round, and put on heavier "Mackinaws" or overcoats when out of doors. Winter brings out a multitude of thick fur coats, with the fur outside, and you will see a procession of bear-like pedestrians in the streets of the cities. That is no strange sight to the Canadians; it may be to you. It is safe to say, however, that before long you will develop a liking for one of those fur coats. They are not cheap if

they are good, and a service greatcoat will probably serve just as well.

In the Spring, which is very short—winter today and summer in a few weeks—the snow melts rapidly, going is difficult in the thinly populated areas; people in the townships have started their journeys on sleighs and ended them on wheels.

Summer is as hot as winter is cold. During the winter the houses have had double windows, and, in the summer, doors and windows are screened with copper gauze to keep out mosquitoes and flies. Mosquitoes are persistent and numerous. They feed on anybody they can find, and although the consequences are not very serious they are very uncomfortable. Citronella oil, which can be bought almost everywhere, keeps most of the mosquitoes away. When sitting out of doors during the summer evenings, joss sticks which burn with pungent fumes discourage the pests, and you will see many people sitting on the porches of their houses facing a "smudge" composed of damp straw which smoulders with a heavy smoke.

Sports, with the exception of cricket, are practically the same as in England.

In the "fall" (their word for Autumn), football is common; but played with a difference. Lacrosse is a fast and furious game calling for great skill. It has been called "hockey in the air."

Baseball takes the place of our summer cricket, and its broad principles are easily mastered; the finer points, of which there are many, come with practice. It is fast; no idler's game.

Skating and ice-hockey with snowshoeing and tobogganing are the usual

winter sports. Ski-ing is available and popular in Quebec and Ontario.

All the essentials for a pleasurable life are there; but they may not always overcome boredom and home-sickness. There is so much to assimilate, and there is much to do in the way of training. Your sojourn over there will not be very long, however, and when it is finished the time will seem to have passed rapidly enough.

Money will perhaps puzzle you for a while. You will "think in English" and try to work out how much such and such an article really costs. If you work on the basis that a nickel (5 cents) is three pence; a dime (10 cents) is sixpence, a quarter of a dollar (25 cents, "a quarter" or "two bits") is one and threepence, and a dollar five shillings, that will do for practical purposes. It will show you a profit of about ten per cent. in actual exchange. Acquire the habit of thinking "Canadian" as quickly as possible, however. There is little difficulty in the exercise.

The cost of living is approximately on the same level as our war-prices, although some things are cheaper and some dearer than at home. Underwear and tobacco are among the cheaper commodities. Suits and overcoats are among the more expensive.

Although your training station may be far from the nearest town, the general principles underlying this booklet remain true, and it may be taken that there is not so marked a difference between the townsman and the countryman in Canada as there is in the home country.

The main purpose of your time in Canada, however, is training. The war may seem remote. Some of the dis-

abilities the people at home are suffering from will be removed; but you are in the war just as certainly, and the call on your services is just as immediate and should be as readily responded to. The sum of individual effort makes the total effort. The Empire with all its resources is unceasingly at work to shorten the war and establish a decent basis of society. Your particular contribution is as important as that of your colleagues. That it **should** be the greatest of which you are capable, is evident, that it **will** be, is certain.

With all the strangeness, and all the little perplexities, all the opportunities and new experience that your visit to Canada must bring, this interlude is really designed to enable you the better to pull your full weight in co-operation with personnel from all parts of the Empire.