

THE BEGINNING

The Story of the West

By ISABEL C. ARMSTRONG.
(Written Specially for this Edition.)

OF no where is it more true than of the Prairie Provinces of Canada, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, that the old order is passing away and all things are yielding to the new. Manitoba is a staid, settled, for the most part thickly populated farming country. Groves or "bluffs" of trees, Manitoba maple, cotton-wood and oak, that in many cases have grown from seed protect the comfortable rural homes from fierce winter winds or the too penetrating rays of the summer sun. The rural telephone has robbed the life of the farmer's wife of the peril of monotony and loneliness. The farmer feels a glow of pride

convenient method or to entertain the frequent guests who chug-chug up to her door, leaving an odor of gasoline in their wake. Others arrive in smart pony traps and carriages while not a few come mounted.

True, the first year the homesteader still builds his dwelling of sod, and this frequently is made to suffice not only for himself but also for whatever live stock he is fortunate enough to possess. His shack is his ark where he and the members of his family occupy the room at one end and the members of his domestic menagerie the room at the other. If he hasn't a family, he isn't always so fastidious.

But the homesteader is not long content with his sod house if he be a worker,—and the West is no place for the shirker. The soil will yield not only a living but a com-



THE INVASION OF PEACE

"I'm going to see some REAL West at last," she gloated.

"Better wear your best bib and tucker," warned the host, who laughed at her enthusiasm.

At seven-thirty the spirited team of bays and a smart double seated wagonette were waiting at the door. The wife of the host came down the stairs, a becoming cloak of latest cut only half concealing a dainty frock that had just arrived from Toronto. But clothes were soon forgotten as the road was taken along the river, overhung by willows, straight towards the foot-hills, behind which loomed the mountains bathed in the glory of the setting sun. As the golden light deepened into crimson then faded to gray, the horses were turned and the trail followed across the open, free prairies. Night was descending as a pause was made



CATTLE DAYS

in seeing his broad wheat fields where a dozen or more of his own sleek, well-fed horses are attached to his reapers, in seeing his own outfit threshing the golden grain. A steam plow turns over the furrows of rich dark earth and when a break-down occurs he doesn't wait to hitch up a horse. He cranks up his auto, jumps in and has made the return trip to town for necessary supplies or repairs in less time that it would have taken to prepare for such a journey in the good old days.

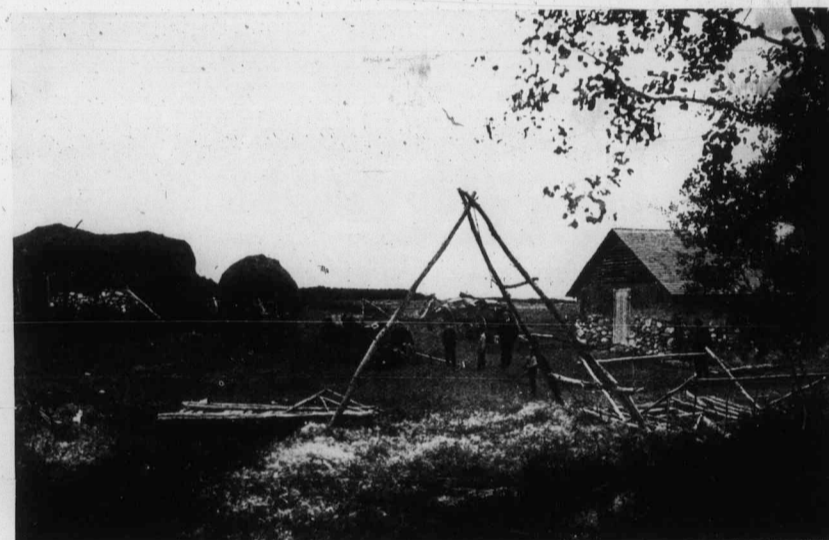
Progress in its march has covered Saskatchewan and even in far west Alberta, the seeker for novelty is prone to sigh, "I have come too late." And the "too late" has come about all within the past few years.

The day of the big ranch is rapidly passing away and so well known a Canadian writer as Agnes Deans Cameron

petency to all who put intelligence and energy into the tilling. In a few years at most, the cabin gives place to a prosperous frame dwelling, with substantial stables to house the increasing stock. The trees which have been planted to beautify and give shade, like everything else, are yielding their best for this gracious soil.

As more and more of the land comes under cultivation, the danger of early frost killing the crops decreases. It is a well-known fact that cultivated land holds the warmth from the sun's rays much longer than uncultivated. Men of optimism, but at the same time experience and good sound judgment, state that the day is not far distant when the menace of frost will cease to alarm the farmer of the Middle West.

In recent years, the ample rain-fall has insured against



HOME

at a gate at the end of a long avenue of trees. Lights glowed in welcome from every window of the house at the other end.

Through a garden which could only be guessed at by the fragrant odors, and across a lawn the guests were led by one son of the household while another led the horses to the barn.

Within was no sound of revelry, no rustic badinage, no "loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind," but rather a highly cultured mirth. The hostess, a very grand lady, indeed, in spite of twenty years on a ranch, far from cities, and not too easy years at that, in the beginning at least, wore an evening gown of irreproachable texture and style.

A telephone in the hall, mission furniture in the living



AU LARGE

is responsible for the statement that scarcely half a hundred of these are left in sunny Alberta. Passing with the big ranch is the picturesque cow-boy, the hero of every boy's romance.

"The Soul of Saskatchewan is a grain of wheat" sings Cy Warman, and he might have added, "The Soul of Alberta, also"—could he have made it rhyme.

Gradually even the private ranches of some thousand acres are being pushed back to the beautiful, grassy, foot-hills which kneel before the Rockies.

But even here is felt the unromantic invasion of an advanced civilization. A trustworthy Chinaman relieves the mistress of onerous domestic duties and leaves her ample time to telephone her orders to town over the provincial rural phone, to chat with neighbors by the same

drought and further insurance is being given to settlers in the irrigation ditches under construction in districts where moisture during former seasons has been insufficient.

It is characteristic of the West not to wait for improvements, but to go ahead and make them. "Make the improvements" and the population will follow is the slogan of towns large and small. The tiny elevator hamlet of yesterday is the bustling town of to-day because it believes in itself and succeeds in inspiring others with this belief. It erects substantial public buildings, lays fine pavements and sidewalks and corners a water supply not for a Yesterday or To-day, but for a big To-morrow.

Last summer a visitor in a small Alberta town was delighted to receive an invitation to an evening party at a private ranch a few miles distant.



THE ANSWER OF THE HARVEST

room, a piano, pianola, books and magazines greeted the eyes of the visitor from the east, who despaired on the spot of ever getting to the West of Dreams.

Though the West is a hustling, bustling, commercial country, the western people are genuine good sports, and wholesome amateur sports like everything else flourish there, baseball, foot-ball, tennis, cricket and particularly lacrosse and polo. And the bridge fiend, too, is found in that free West land, and the devotee of the afternoon tea. An eastern city is only becoming aware of the fact that a western suburban town composed of a water tank, two grain elevators and a straggling main street has borrowed its manners and customs when the western hamlet turns round and teaches the eastern city some new antics. This, in brief, is the story of the West.

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