

CREWS FOR CANADA'S NAVY

By H. M. MOSDELL.

AS an outcome of the recent Imperial Defence Conference, it is understood that Canada has undertaken to provide a fleet of war-ships to aid in the defence of her own sea-board and merchant marine. According to the plan outlined in press despatches, British cruisers, manned by seamen from the regular navy are to be loaned by the Admiralty to form the nucleus of the proposed fleet. Canada is then to build, equip and man her own ships. With the establishment of new shipbuilding yards, or the elaboration of these already in existence, the mechanical part of the creation of the new flotilla will not be so very difficult of accomplishment; the big problem will be to man the ships with an efficient personnel. Despite the fact that so large a proportion of the population of the Maritime Provinces of the Dominion gains a livelihood from the sea, nothing has been done by either the Federal or the Imperial authorities to take advantage of the sailorly qualities so acquired and adapt them to purposes of naval defence. Furthermore, it is stated, and to the accompaniment of strong argument, that very few of this fishing population are now likely to willingly submit themselves to a course of naval instruction. The fisherman of the Maritime Provinces is essentially a lover of home. Recent years have brought to him a great measure of prosperity. His surroundings are pleasant, attractive and comfortable in the extreme. His work is of such a nature that he is never away from home more than about ten or twelve hours at a time and it pays him better than any other ordinary occupation could possibly be expected to do. The British fleet has nothing to offer these men to offset the attractions of home life in the prosperous fishing sections of the Maritime Provinces. Also the Canadian fisherman has acquired a very considerable bump of independence with long-continued prosperity and having known practically no master but himself in all his experience will be a somewhat difficult subject for an officer to train in the ways of discipline on board a man-o'-war. Also the establishment of a naval reserve in Halifax or one of the other Atlantic ports is more likely to benefit the United States fleet than that of Great Britain, for life on board the ship flying the Stars and Stripes is far more enjoyable, is better paid withal, than that led by the jackies who serve under the Union Jack.

The key to this difficult problem is to be found in the fishing population of Newfoundland. Men and conditions there form a direct contrast to those existing in the Maritime Provinces of Canada. The home ties of the Newfoundlander are far less binding than those of his Canadian neighbour. His avocation takes him generally about a thousand miles away from home in the spring and he spends the whole of the season on the rough, unattractive coast of Labrador. About the middle or end of November he returns home and from then until about the beginning of May he spends his time in enforced idleness. His work is not at all remunerative. His master provides him with a fishing outfit and with the bare necessities of life during the season. He has to provide his own clothing and also to make provision for the family he leaves at home. At the end of the season he receives a wage that may, if the voyage has been a profitable one, amount to \$150. His life during the winter months is dull and irksome and especially palls on the younger folk. Of amusements there are practically none and even if this were not the case he could ill-afford to be extravagant with such a small capital on hand. Of recent years it has become the custom for the younger men and women to spend the winter months in Canada or the United States where they secure employment that enables them to pay living expenses and also to save up a little money to take home with them in the spring.

It was not till 1900 that the Admiralty gave any signs of having recognised the pre-eminent importance of the fisherfolk of Newfoundland to the Imperial navy. Then, at the very urgent and persistent request of Sir H. H. Murray, at that time Governor of the Island, they established the nucleus of a naval reserve. How grudgingly they adopted his suggestion may be gathered from the fact that they stipulated that the enrolment should not exceed 700 men and that they sent over an antiquated gunboat to provide the necessary training quarters for the recruits. Think of the farsightedness of the policy of providing for the training of less than one thousand capable seamen when they could have had more than twenty times that number. And practically every man would have been available for service in the British navy at any time within five

years, for there was very little possibility of their drifting to any other fleet.

The popularity of the movement soon became very apparent. The best material offered itself, and the limit of enrolment was soon reached. Financially the inducements offered were very small but there were other things that counted for much with the young fisherman. The retaining fee of thirty dollars was not the convincing attraction, but he was glad to spend a month on the training ship in St. John's, where life was much more pleasant than at some isolated little village where there was little to relieve the tedious months of idleness. The opportunity of training for the service of the Empire also appealed to the loyalty of the people, for, despite all statements to the contrary, loyalty is one of the deep-seated and inalienable sentiments that mould the character of the Newfoundlander. The annual month of training was always arranged so that each detachment could return home before the opening of the fishing season. During the period of training the men are provided with food and clothing and receive in addition sixty cents per day. Each man enrolls for a full period of five years, and at the end of that time, if physically fit, may be re-enrolled for an equal period, if they so desire.

Life on board the training ship is in all respects

similar to that on one of the regular ships of the navy. The men are, of course, practically conversant with all except the finer points of seamanship. Many of them are also very good shots, for the fisherman has ample opportunity to use the gun either on the wild sea-fowl or on the partridge and deer that abound on the Newfoundland moors. The recruits, therefore, prove especially responsive to training. They are thoroughly drilled in the management of the big guns and in the proper employment of small arms. The course of training results in a wonderful improvement of the physique of the young fisherman and a squad of reservists on parade, acting at some of the public functions always receive generous applause for their splendid appearance from the citizens of St. John's.

Every fall a detachment of about fifty reservists is sent to the West Indies on a six months' cruise in one of the British cruisers which does fishery protection duty on the Newfoundland coast during the summer. This is a trip that few reservists care to miss. To many of them it is the first time they ever left the shores of their island home. Hence there is something especially alluring to them in the idea of looking on foreign parts from the deck of a British man-o'-war. Their association with the regular bluejacket during a cruise of this length makes the reservists most capable in all the duties that fall to the lot of the sailor on board one of the big modern warships. Their capabilities are the subject of much praise by all the English officers who have handled them. They prove willing and persistent in the performance of all the tasks assigned by their superiors.

THE SCIENTISTS AT WINNIPEG

COSMOPOLITAN as Winnipeg is every day in the week—for one week lately even the cosmopolitan Winnipegger has been stopping on the street to notice the unusual-looking men that came in from the east and pitched camp in the city. The British Association for the Advancement of Science has managed to corral most of the modern world's thought in the fields of investigation. But this is the first time science in bulk has travelled so far west in Canada. Both Montreal, in 1884, and Toronto, in 1897, have had the Association. In both these places the visitation was considered remarkable, though each is a university city and each has been the abode of one or more distinguished scientists, such as Sir William Dawson and Sir Daniel Wilson.

Forenoon of a bright, hot day two citizens of Winnipeg meet on Main St. in the swinging sounding crowd that palpitates between the C.P.R. station and Portage Avenue.

"Well—fine morning again?"

"Splendid! Never saw better wheat weather. Did you?"

"Never. A week or so of this and——"

Then a car went by and another man swung along shouting that the West this year will produce a hundred and twenty million bushels of wheat.

"Well what's your calculation?"

"Mm"—whiffing a cigar—"Hundred and four-teen."

"Ho! Say—I'll go you a box of cigars it'll be a hundred and nineteen."

"I'll take you." Bet is recorded in memo books; mere item of business.

"Hullo. What's this outfit coming?"

Both turn to gaze hard at a group of rather leisurely, high-browed and somewhat bespectacled men who drift up among the random, wheat-calculating crowd towards the Walker Theatre.

"Guess that's a bunch of the scientists. British Association——" rather scrambles the rest, but knows very well what he means, for he has been talking for a month about this great gathering, the first in history, with more than a thousand scholars from over seas and from the east, filling the Royal Alexander and the Walker Theatre and putting a touch of subdued scolasticism on the jostling hurly-burly of Main Street.

For a moment the wheat men discuss the newcomers.

"Pretty wise aggregation that, I guess."

"Hm! Know a little of everything I daresay. Oh say, d'you see that short, stout sailor-looking man mooching along there? Well, that's Sir William White. He's the man that gave the spiel on Canadian waterways and shipping——"

"Oh yes; man that designed the modern British navy. Good head. That's the kind of scientist that makes a hit with me."

And they drift on again. The city of wheat

shuffles the men on the board and before noon a hundred theories and counter theories about the wheat and the weather have been swapped, while in the quiet of the Walker Theatre the affairs of ultimate science are being discussed from the geology of Western Canada to the Osmotic Pressure in the blood of fishes.

For once the newspapers of Winnipeg devoted front-page stories to research. What the scientists think about certain things—yea, about almost anything—has been considered as of more passing importance than what's what about wheat or how much So-and-So cleaned up on speculation yesterday. This is a good thing. It was a fine thing and somewhat of a curiosity years ago when Prof. Tyndall made New York dream dreams about the forms of water; and while the forms of water do not supremely interest Winnipeg except when too much rain and hail happens to come on the wheat, it is quite certain that the most cosmopolitan city in Canada will manage to get more lasting good out of this meeting of the scientists than even Montreal or Toronto did. Winnipeg may not be a university town. But Winnipeg has an open mind. The average Winnipegger has room in his cranium for a large number of ideas. He thinks quickly and moves rapidly. He is not stodgy nor subdued. How can he be with four months of every year a wild-goose chase of late wet and early frost, of hail and of rust—and one huge delightful gamble concerning wheat?

Indeed, if the Psychological Section of the British Association should decide to place the brain of a real live Winnipegger under the microscope they might discover some cellular properties never dreamed of by Huxley or Herbert Spencer. It is a good thing for the Association to have met in Winnipeg. Where in the world or the Empire could this body of savants have found a city of more human interest? Where else are the problems of Empire more in the mixing? What city is so likely to keep the average scientist guessing as to what will happen next? Besides many of them have been living in what Kipling called the finest hotel in the world. They have seen the railway yards with more than three hundred miles of trackage; more sorts and conditions of people in the C.P.R. station than in any other part of the Empire except London; more optimism to the block than can be found anywhere else in the Empire to the acre; and as democratically cosmopolitan a variety of ideas and opinions as can be found anywhere.

But the most occult scientist in the Anthropological Section may search Winnipeg from end to end if he will, and not discover a single roving redskin such as he expected to see; such as he has read about; may not behold even one half-breed unless he should chance to be strolling up around the Hudson Bay Co. reserve; may not even see ten cowboy hats.