

Keep Your Eye on Saskatchewan

By Prof. J. W. MACMILLAN, Manitoba College, Winnipeg.

I spent a fortnight recently in Saskatchewan. I had not seen it in the ten previous years. And I saw it this year at a disadvantage, for it was in the grip of the lowest temperature and the deepest snows it had known in that ten years. Yet it impressed me so mightily that I wish to tell somebody—preferably somebody in the east—about it.

It is a great fact. Huxley said, you know, that a scientist was a man who sat down in front of a fact like a little child. Facts have a way of revenging themselves upon people who treat them irreverently. The easterner who thinks of the Prairie Provinces as mere colonies of old Canada will not live long before he will be startled out of that misconception. There is much going on besides wheat-growing, real estate speculation and the borrowing of money from loan companies in Saskatchewan. The west is not at all disposed to be imitative of the east. There is developing, in the wide areas of this province, a people possessed of originality and courage, who have devoted themselves, with astonishing fervor and confidence, to the solution of those problems which their community life presses upon them.

Running westward on the Canadian Pacific Railway, as the evening lengthened, we crossed the boundary of Manitoba. Immediately the porter hung on a nail in the smoking compartment of the sleeping-car a printed notice stating that in the Province of Saskatchewan all public drinking was prohibited. A young man present turned his eyes upon it and remarked, "By George, I've put my night-cap off too long." A few minutes later, when the conversation had swung into a discussion of the new prohibitory legislation of the Province, this same young man roundly approved it. No, this young man was not a hypocrite. Being a resident of Saskatchewan he had caught the social viewpoint. The problem of alcoholic indulgence was not to him one chiefly of personal liberty. He thought of it, not as it applied to him, but as it applied to the community. And anyone who is unable to appreciate his position, and who thinks him inconsistent or pharisaic, is missing the point of great sweeping changes which are pervading the world to-day, and which Saskatchewan is one of the first Provinces in Canada to respond to.

Regina is a city not only vastly increased but essentially transformed during the past decade. One seeks in vain for traces of the cyclone of four years

ago. And that particular reconstruction is a mere incident in what she has done for herself. Regina has found her soul. It might have puzzled a visitor ten years ago to discover why her people were so proud of their city, as they certainly were. It would not puzzle him now. One sees parks which show through the snow evidences of skill and care. Solid and handsome buildings line the asphalted streets. The residential section has many spacious and comfortable homes. The new Parliament buildings are a noble pile, and an artificial lake has been constructed before them. The Legislature was soon to meet. In anticipation of the session a Live Stock Commission was sitting. Another Commission was deliberating about grain growing. The papers were full of a discussion about schools. In it all the note of political partisanship was strangely missing. No doubt it lurked somewhere in the background and would be tooted distinctly enough when the next election came. But, in the meantime, there was an unfamiliar reality and vitality in the public discussions, as befitted an attention fixed on the welfare of the whole Province rather than the empty victory of one section over another.

I went to Saskatoon. Now, in the distant east Saskatoon is best known by the fame of its subdivisions. You hear little of subdivisions in Saskatoon to-day. Neither do you hear any moaning over the glory which had departed. You find instead a surprisingly cheerful town, grinning a little if you twit it with having had a boom, but confident in its future and that it is destined to play a big part in the coming golden prosperity of Saskatchewan. The population of Saskatoon has fallen, I was told, from about 28,000 to about 20,000 during the last three years. But the school population has scarcely declined. Those who have gone were the floating and unstable elements. What was substantial in the city has endured.

Here is the University, its massive buildings standing just across the river from the main portion of the city. One is specially struck with the agricultural department. Other Universities in Canada are connected, more or less loosely, with schools of agricultural department. Other Universities in Canada are connected, more or less loosely, with schools of agriculture. But here they are identified. They occupy the same site, with the stables and the poultry-runs and the seed-plots not a hundred yards from the class-

rooms where quaternions and the ablative absolute are taught. Agriculture is as much a faculty as Political science is. Indeed, I suspect that these two faculties enjoy a specially close relation. Even the students for theology in one of the affiliated church colleges are required to take certain lectures and demonstrations in agriculture against the day when they shall require to operate on "The Church and the Rural Problem."

The Board of Trade of Saskatoon gave a banquet to Mr. Seager Wheeler. This gentleman is, in one prominent respect, the leading citizen of Saskatchewan. He is the farmer who has beaten the world growing wheat. His bushel has taken medals from all other bushels. Russia, Hungary, the Argentine, India, Egypt, and the United States have all been forced to acknowledge him supreme. And his glory is the glory of the Saskatchewan district. He did it all, as he explained, by "seed selection and crop improvement." This phrase seems likely to become the agricultural slogan of Saskatchewan. He has apparently not realized riches for himself. But his patient methods of picking out the premier grains of wheat are yearly adding millions to the wealth of his Province.

One heard of the coming convention of the Grain Growers' Association of Saskatchewan. It is to be held in a church because no other auditorium could house the fifteen hundred delegates. The Grain Growers' Association is a different thing from the old-time Grange or Patrons of Industry. It has a breadth, cohesion and ambition they never knew. It is, so far at least, non-partisan. But it is intensely political. It is greatly interested in government, elevators, schools, women, railways, co-operation, rural credits, live stock, tractors, poultry, the tariff. . . .

I thought of Wisconsin and the part it is playing in the United States. Is Saskatchewan going to be our Wisconsin? Will its University essay the same popular role as the University of Wisconsin? Will men like LaFollette come out of Saskatchewan to join with kindred spirits from other western Provinces and insist that out statutory legislation shall consider human as well as property values? I think it not unlikely.

Climate and topography have something to do with it, no doubt. The dry, keen air, the absence of sea or mountains, the quick and generous but variable response of the soil to tillage, the necessity of work and its bountiful reward—these things have their influence upon people and make them active, serious, concentrated. Saskatchewan will not probably become a garden of poets and artists. It will breed a very practical type of man and woman, whose part and lot in the future career of Canada will be a leading one.

Cotton vs. Wheat

By GUY CATHCART PELTON

The cotton growers of the South are not growing rich on their crops. Most of the money in cotton is made by the Cotton Factors or Brokers. The cotton country is no country for the man with small means or for the young man who has little to start with financially.

And the reason that the growing of cotton is not a money-making business for the planters is because of the necessity of fertilizing the plantations. It is said in the South that by the time the planter has paid for his fertilizer and the harvesting and marketing of his crop, he doesn't have much left.

It takes thousands of dollars to fertilize the cotton fields and the price of fertilizers has been continually increasing. One of the biggest industries of the South is the fertilizing industry, whose plants are amongst the largest manufacturing concerns of the cotton states.

After deducting expenses there is more money per acre in a wheat crop than in a cotton crop. In the Canadian West where the agriculturist pays practically nothing for fertilization of the soil, there is more money in wheat than in the Southern States cotton fields. Moreover the grain-grower gets a bigger share of the money from his crop than does the cotton grower. The middleman between the grain-grower and the consumer doesn't get nearly as much money as the middleman who comes between the cotton grower and the consumer.

The cotton fields of the South offer no inducements to the new settler nor to the farmer who can have only a small farm. Even the big plantations,

which embrace thousands of acres, have to be managed with extreme caution and thrift to produce a profit after paying for the cost of fertilization, harvesting and marketing.

After several months in the South and after a careful study of conditions I am more convinced than ever that the wheat fields of Canada offer at the present time the biggest agricultural inducements to new settlers. And to small farmers, on this continent. Moreover, the opportunity for raising live stock in Western Canada is not surpassed in America.

As to cotton vs. wheat, the conditions of the present years are good examples of prosperity among the agriculturists. Wheat this year is away above a dollar a bushel, and at that it is paying the grain-growers of the Canadian West a handsome return for their crop. There is no great prosperity among the cotton growers of the South this year, and I am of the opinion that the wheat growers of Western Canada are in a much happier financial condition than the cotton growers of the South.

I have found no examples of individuals who have from a small beginning in a half a dozen years accomplished almost financial independence from the agricultural pursuits of the South, such as I have frequently found among the wheat growers and the cattle ranches of the Canadian West.

While I must admit an admiration for the charm of Southern winter climate and southern hospitality, I can see here no opportunities for agricultural industry such as are offered in the Canadian West. Savannah, Ga., Feb. 25, '16.

A NEST EGG FOR PATRIOTIC FUND.

Senator Choquette last Thursday pointed out a handsome nest egg of one million dollars—at present without any owner to claim it. The million dollars is made up of unclaimed bank balances: \$1,000,000 in sums large and small left in the banks of Canada and apparently likely to remain there, without known owners.

Prominent members of the Senate seemed to think the unclaimed million might very properly be taken by the Dominion government and passed on to the Patriotic or other national fund. The balances plainly do not belong to the banking companies. They have notified the Dominion government of the fact and can do no more. The owners cannot be traced, or, after being notified by the banks, have allowed five or more years to elapse without collecting their balances.

Senator Choquette's proposal is that sixty days' notice be given by the Finance Minister that the government proposed to enlist the unclaimed bank balances into the national service—for the Patriotic Fund. "The notice would afford those who desired the opportunity of withdrawing the money they had not claimed for years."

At a time when it is quite in order to conscript men's lives for the national service elsewhere in the Empire, it would be a moderate measure of confiscation in Canada to take the million dollars at present claimed by nobody and put it to the useful purpose of the Patriotic Fund. Perhaps the banks might volunteer it?—Ottawa Citizen.

PERSONALS.

Mr. W. G. Gooderham, former vice-president of the Bank of Toronto has been elected to the presidency of the Bank succeeding the late Mr. Duncan Coulson.

Mr. Joseph Henderson has been elected vice-president of the Bank of Toronto.