

Fair Alberta's Lively Celebration.

From Our Special Correspondent.

You may read about the West in newspapers and magazines; you may have friends there only too willing to tell you all about it; you may have formed in your own mind the broadest, highest notions of its marvellous expansion and its still more marvellous possibilities; and all will be of no avail unless you actually see the country for yourself with your own physical eyes.

Reading about it is of little use; Government reports even are tame; you have to pass through the land and see what is there, and appraise it, and listen to the voice of its own people in their own territory; and, having done this, you are not much further advanced; you are simply staggered by the immensity of the problem which a rational judgment of its present and future is called upon to fill.

The latter position is mine. I have seen a little portion of the great Canadian North-West; that is to say, I have skimmed over a small fraction of it—and I am still trying, not very effectually, to collect my thoughts and put them into such shape that they will present to a distant reader some slight notion of the general conditions without allowing him to suspect for the shortest moment any degree of finality, either in the potentialities touched on or in the judgment formed thereon.

When a person from the East has reached that remarkable place, Winnipeg, and the prairie country, with its miles and miles of golden wheat, he already begins to think Canada a pretty big proposition; when, however, he has left that far behind, and, travelling through thousands of square miles, finds the country even fuller of promise for the future than ever, he is not only sure of it, but begins to see that what is really called for is the work of the descriptive specialist rather than a general summary of detailed conditions which, properly done, would fill several numbers of *The Monetary Times*. And he is very apt to decide to seize a "better opportunity," and postpone the heavy task of forcing his own somewhat disordered impressions into tangible shape till—till they become even more disordered by a new aggregation of even more numerous impressions. To come to the gist of this first letter however. When, as I say, the raw Easterner reaches Calgary, for example, he has generally come to the conclusion that he has already seen "quite a little bit" of the West, and usually he is quite ready to allow matters to stand at that for a while, so as to allow impressions to "soak in." He is hardly prepared to be told that this is but the beginning, that away up north from the Rocky foothills and beyond the cattle-dotted vastness of those seemingly limitless prairies there is a stretch of land which, for richness of soil, varied opportunities for successful farming, and civic progress already made—I mean by this the actual forming, organization and building up of towns and villages—is hard to duplicate on this continent. It creates a lingering astonishment in the mind of the new beholder.

Edmonton district is the country to which I refer; and nobody who had the good fortune to be present last Friday at the inaugural celebration of the new Province of Alberta will hesitate to admit that this brief snap-portrait of what he and I and all of us saw on our trip to that region falls far short of the reality.

The whole of the new Province of Alberta has been this week in the throes of glorification at the great ceremony of autonomification, if I may coin such a word; but naturally, Edmonton as the probable capital was the spot at which the joyful celebration reached its culminating point. To say that Edmonton did its part royally is but a half-sufficing tribute.

Imagine a city—small now only in size, and not very small even in that—nobly situated on beautiful wooded hills overlooking a natural amphitheatre, which appears to have been planned from the absolute beginning of things for the playground of a great metropolis. Imagine that young city to have been laid out with sufficient wise forethought to have wide streets, fine brick buildings, and with sufficient recognition of the comforts of the present to have extensive granolithic walks, good electric lighting, telephone and water services, etc. Imagine, too, the streets of that city swarming with the crowds of its own citizens on holiday bent, but with multitudes on multitudes of out-of-town visitors, all desiring—and meaning—to have the greatest time of their lives. On top of all this figure to yourselves an enveloping mass of bunting which for color effects and joyful significance would quite easily have put Toronto's Jubilee celebration in the shade—I mean proportionately, of course—and you may, perhaps glean some faint idea of what Edmonton looked like last Friday.

But even this by no means tells the whole of the story. The real celebration was not in the decorations or the music, or the speeches, though some fine ones were delivered by the

Governor-General, by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Hon. Mr. Paterson, by Mayor MacKenzie and others, but in the attitude of these far North-Western brothers of ours. Sir Wilfrid may be ever so sure of the great future of this part of the great Canadian federation, and so may His Excellency; but the real surety for that future lies in the irresistible determination of the people of Edmonton to make that future.

The way they celebrated is only one indication of the spirit in which the people of Edmonton district undertake to carry through any object that appeals to them. The celebration had to be well done; and it was well done—to every most minute detail it was a wonderful success.

But, as I have said, it is only as an indication of the spirit of the West that needs to speak of the inaugural ceremonies themselves. They were an unqualified success in every way, and visitors were greeted with a hospitality that they will remember for the rest of their days. What interested me even more than the jubilation was the country



Mr. K. W. MacKenzie, Mayor of Edmonton

Chairman Alberta Inaugural Celebration Committee.

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