



Four English-Canadians who managed the tour of five hundred fellow-countrymen from Canada to England last month: Mr. George Meech, Mr. Hollins, Mr. Robert Verity and Mr. Richard Meech

## BACK TO THE HOMELAND

*Little Ship Stories of Englishmen who have made Homes in Canada and went back for a Glimpse of Old England*

By J. W. PLEWMAN

OUT on the boundless ocean, far removed from the noise and bustle of the city, one turns his attention on his fellows, and finds them intensely interesting. An Atlantic liner is a splendid place to take a course in human nature, for a ship's company is gathered from all corners of the world, represents every conceivable type of character as well as every station in life, and the missions on which the passengers are bent, indicate the play of all the varied human passions.

Among the party which the Sons of England took across the Atlantic on the Canadian Northern's Royal George in July, was a young woman of refinement who became a widow seven weeks after she went to Toronto to be married. She was on her way to north China, as a missionary under Bishop White, the Canadian, and expected to be twenty-one days on the train crossing Russia and Siberia.

Another of the passengers was a married woman hastening from Saskatchewan to the bedside of a sister dying of an incurable malady. She was a person of means, but left so hurriedly for England that she had no time to secure a berth on the Pullman, which happened to be full, and she had to sleep as she could in the day-coach during the five days on the train to Montreal.

### Diversified Experiences.

Three parsons were on board. One was trying to bolster up his nerves by an ocean voyage; the second hoped to secure assistance in London for the All-People's Mission in Montreal; the third was just having a diversion.

The purpose of the great majority on the ship, however, was to visit the scenes of their earlier life. The excursionists numbered nearly five hundred. Over half that number were from Ontario, but not a Province of Confederation was without a representative. Toronto alone sent two hundred.

They were a prosperous lot. They had a dollar for every ha'penny they had brought to Canada. By no means a dressy crowd; mainly hard-working people, who by sheer endeavour had reached a position of comfort, and now at middle-age, while disposed to take life a little easier, had not learned to put a high estimate on fashionable clothes. What is more to the point, several could sign cheques for a cool hundred thousand, and all could afford to take a few weeks off to enjoy spending some of their well-earned savings.

While one fastidious English newspaperman who met them at a public function wrote that "it was curious how plainly dressed the men were," the return of the excursionists to widely-scattered towns and cities in England is certain to encourage thousands of their former associates to try their luck in Canada.

One man whose career illustrates the pluck that will win the day wherever success is to be won, was W. Wellband of Winnipeg. His life's story,

which he is never tired repeating, will do much to advertise the advantages of this country.

"I left Kent forty-five years ago because England was too cramped for me," says this grizzled old pioneer. "I made two fortunes in Manitoba and lost them both, one by the collapse of the boom and the other by the burning of my store and its stock of \$90,000. I went at it again, and now I'm going home with an independent fortune. I made up my mind when I came here that I would not return till I had made my pile."

### Where Pluck Wins.

Two brothers from Bristol also had found prosperity in Toronto where they are engaged in the retail meat business. Once a big competitor demanded that they sell out. They refused, and the big fellow located next door as he threatened to do. But even customers are loyal, and the brothers continue to make money.

A passenger who had found the lot of the average man happier in Canada than in England, had



A Fine Day on Shipboard

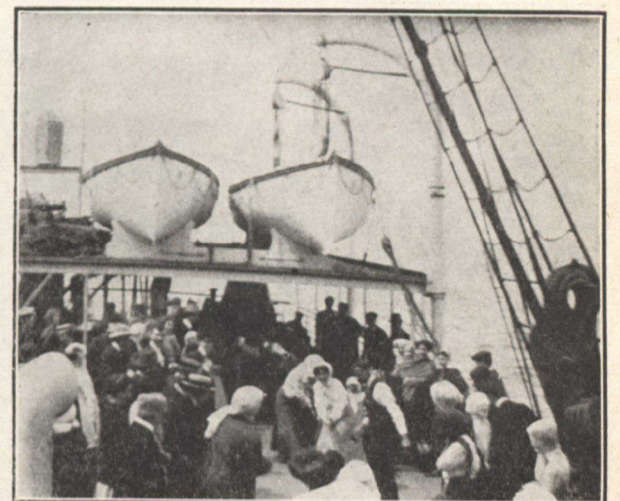
been for eighteen years in the shoe business in Nottingham where he had kept three stores. Trade was bad and he had to pay off his creditors and start for Canada with eight children under thirteen years of age, and a sum total of seventy dollars in his pockets. To-day, grey-bearded and venerable, he is as active as a sixteen-year-old and under no necessity to work.

And so it goes. The testimony of the excursionists was that in the new world, but still under the British flag, success may be earned by worth and adaptability. Moreover, as one Yorkshire lady's experiences emphasised, a hearty welcome always awaits the immigrant from England who is willing to fit in with the ways of the country. This lady, after being five years in Saskatchewan, declared money was quickly if not easily made in the West.

"As soon as a lady reaches town," she said, "all the ladies of the church call on her. I made more friends in Saskatchewan in four years than I did all my life in England."

### Helping Hands in a New World.

Illustrating the readiness of the people to help the deserving, and particularly the newcomer, this lady cited the case of a man who was told by the oculist he would become entirely blind unless treated by a specialist in England. The townspeople immediately came to his aid. They raised the funds to send him across the ocean, and supported his wife and child for a whole year. As a result, his eyesight was saved, and the man is a leading merchant, owing his fellows nothing but gratitude.



A Few Games on Deck

The oldest man on the ship and one who did not miss a single meal, came from Oshawa. He was seventy-nine years old, travelling alone, in spite of his great age, went with a party of fifty on a three-weeks arduous tour over the Great Western lines in England and Scotland. Though a Canadian-born, remarks he made best explain why our own Northwest is the magnet that draws people from all nations.

"As much money can be made in five years out West as in twenty-five years in Ontario," he asserted, "I know young fellows, not particularly brilliant, sons of a drunken Englishman, who went west five years ago. They are all doing well. I stayed with one of them two years ago. He had 320 acres, and splendid barns. Finer horses I never saw. If he had stayed in Ontario he would never have succeeded."

It would become monotonous to describe in further detail here the experiences in Canada of the Sons of England excursionists. Their life stories, however, told to the friends whom they left in England years ago, sounds like romance, and being so widely related by the scattered party, are sure to induce many to make a new bid for fortune. For a Canadian seldom proclaims himself as such, while in England, without someone stating he had been thinking of coming to this country.

The Sons of England and the Canadian Northern have every reason to be gratified that they arranged for such an excursion to the homeland. It would be a real benefit to Canada if the excursion becomes an annual event as its promoters promise.

As a counter play to this interesting migration, a party of West-of-England business men, mainly from Bristol, will sail shortly for a visit to Canada. Their main objective point will be the Canadian National Exhibition, the management of which have arranged for a West-of-England day. This event will be marked by many characteristically West-of-England doings and customs, many of them exceedingly quaint and original.