

THE KING : A WESTERN VIEW

NOTHING amuses the Canadian more than to read the solemn discussions in English newspapers about his loyalty. Why, bless you, the average Westerner has a streak of it in him that would make most Englishmen blush. For the meaning of devotion to Crown and Empire you want to traverse the Last Best West, and when you reach the Pacific you must acknowledge you knew nothing about it on the Atlantic.

YOU may go sight seeing in Montreal, where the chief sights are banks and churches—criteria both of success, though of different kinds; you may stop off for a day's shooting in that marvellous labyrinth of lakes and rivers and trees called New Ontario; you may roll across the never-ending wheatfields of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, visit the northern lumber camps, converse with the river drivers, penetrate high up among the Rockies, where the scenery has Switzerland counted right out, and drop in on any little mining town to peruse its very twentieth century newspaper; finally you come to the cities of the Pacific, in the free libraries of which you find *Punch*, the *Illustrated London News*, and other old friends—and everywhere it is "God save our King." But when any event touches the person of His Majesty the real loyalty of the Westerner stands revealed, for nothing else is of such absorbing interest to them. True, they have some queer ideas about lords and dukes—people who wear monocles and coronets and oppress the poor—but the King, God bless him! is above all that; a wise, good, far-seeing and powerful father, who watches his Colonies with kindly eye, rejoicing in their prosperity, and to whom the Backfoot Indian and the Montreal millionaire may appeal alike.

CANADIANS born may pretend occasionally to despise Englishmen, but in the bottom of their hearts they have a deep admiration for the tough little island that leads the world, and a very real love for the man who symbolises its majesty, while often and often you come across families that have Anglomania—not always mildly, either. Suppose you are there for Sunday tea. Your host is a true Easterner, and has prospered since he reached the West. The room you are sitting in shows that. Around him is his family, the Misses Joanna Canuck embarrassingly interested in you, while the rest of the party ask you to describe the Strand, the Houses of Parliament, and the Old Country piecemeal. Wait a bit, though. For, first of all, before you are fairly seated, they want to know if you have seen the King; and if so, happy art thou if thou mayest describe him even to the veriest detail of His Majesty's raiment; and if thou art not put to shame by the unaffected loyalty of these fellow-subjects, right loyal wert thou already.

SO much for Canadians born. How about Americans? As a rule they rather like the idea of a new kind of President, reports to the contrary notwithstanding, and when they find they are as absolutely free as they were under the Stars and Stripes, while law and order are pleasantly prominent, the vast majority become as aggressively loyal to the King as they were before enthusiastic for the President. A true incident illustrates this.

IT was the annual concert at the Narrow Lake schoolhouse—if you have an up-to-date map of Central Saskatchewan you will see Narrow Lake, as bold as print can make it, away north west of Saskatoon—and the company was singing "God Save the King" at the end with a swing that made the rafters ring. There were two American families, however, who had newly come to the country, and they insisted on singing "God Save McKinley." Afterwards they wished they hadn't, for the settlement (made up of about equal proportions of Americans, Canadians and Englishmen) socially ostracised them until they were very sorry and didn't do it again.

WITH regard to the Englishman, distance lends enchantment, and the little island back across the seas, with all that therein is, becomes something sacred to him. He marvels how his thoughts of loyalty and patriotism were not warmer before, and with the other people of the Great Plains, throws a world of earnestness into his voice when he sings:

"Send him victorious, happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the King."

E. P. WHEATLEY.

CANADIAN PACIFIC