## A King in the West By WILL H. OGILVIE

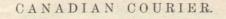
WHO is he-this King of the West?

Who is he—this King of the West? A squatter or station-owner as a rule; for the most part, though not inevitably, a Scotchman. All that have travelled through the Bush Land know him. Long before one crosses the unmarked boundary of his kingdom one hears of him. The drovers are speaking of him. one crosses the unmarked boundary of his kingdom one hears of him. The drovers are speaking of him—"And old Bruce" (or McDougall, or Scott, or McDonald, or Stevenson—quisque regno!) "he let me put my horses in the bend of his horse-paddock good luck to him!" And the teamsters:— "Bruce, he says to me, 'You leave the old leader here till you come through again—plenty of grass here'—he says. He's a white man is Bruce!" The swagman knows him; he has travelled weary miles through the stations and selections, has passed "Hungry Bob's" and "Scabby Wil-son's" with a tightened belt and a smothered curse, but here he is on white man's ground at last! The very gates call "Welcome!" the very trees wave sympathy. One of the huts at the shearing-shed

smothered curse, but here he is on white man's ground at last! The very gates call "Welcome!" the very trees wave sympathy. One of the huts at the shearing-shed is given up as a camping place for the travellers, firewood is stacked at the door for them and water tanks are at hand. Up at the store the store-keep-er is ready to give them flour and tea and sugar, and even tobacco, for the asking; and to offer payment is to call forth the ready rebuke—"This is Bruce's!" When the teamster, toiling down through the flood-water on the black-soil flats, pulls into a swamp which he has not sufficient strength to get out of; when at last mud-spattered, baffled and disgusted he unchains his weary horses and rides up to the sta-tion for the help that he knows will not be asked in vain—then the King sends down four or eight or more of his strong fat horses, hooks them on to the stranded waggon and drags it out upon the high ground. "Poor to his more careless neighbours, "they swamps, I am glad when I can help If a coach contractor starts a new line of coaches on the road, he knows that the King will run h's horses free 'Just to give him a start." If the Queensland drover, short-handed and in trouble, has lost his that "old Bruce" will lend him a man when the ne'ghbouring squatters that station managers are driving from town, they say "Let us push on of the King waits always the regal "The ender is always the regal the of the high grourneys to and as far as Bruce's!" for at the palace welcome. Thendent princes who need to bow to

welcome. These men, these sunbrowned inde-pendent princes who need to bow to and many times his guests. In the country town, the capital of his kingdom, the white man reigns supreme. Members of Parliament, mayors and magistrates may rule in his absence, kings in their petty coun-cits—but the white man of the dis-trict is the over-lord, the emperor of At the

trict is the over-lord, the emperor of them all. At the Agricultural Show, at every bound and political, billiard of the Agricultural Show, at every towamment and church bazaar, at hos-pital committee, at Race Club meet actually so in the flesh at least in recognizes the fact and is glad. For out-back they love their King. When his old chestnut horse wins on the township track there is no waver who receives such an ovation only but all men are his friends and bush-stands and cheer with all the When, in royal person, he drives ing, the four in-hand into the shows and use, it is a wild roar of delight



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