

## PEOPLE AND PLACES

### Technical Education in Manitoba

THE last issue of the Manitoba Gazette makes interesting reading. It announces the appointment of a special commission by the Manitoba government on technical education. The Ottawa authorities have a commission touring the country getting pointers on the same subject. Evidently the people out in Manitoba think they know their own business best; they are going to thrash out the school problem themselves. None of the other provinces have got down to hard thinking on technical education. Of course, there are some live people in Ontario and the East who occasionally are impressed that there is something the matter with the Canadian school system. They see the rural districts being depopulated of the brightest young chaps, who are running off to the towns into the High schools, and thence into the "learned professions." Why this phenomenon? The High schools do not teach the country boys how to make a living at home. They produce lawyers, doctors and dentists—but not farmers. Nor do they teach the town boy, who is learning tailoring, or plumbing, any new tricks of his trade. These High schools are not adapted to the needs of the country; they are slightly out of date. Their deficiencies Manitoba has

But where is the representative of the hundreds of women workers in the shops and factories of Manitoba? The feminine element is just as absent from the Manitoba Technical Commission as from that of the Dominion government. Is the situation in Manitoba to be like that described by an indignant lady who attended a Montreal session of the Dominion commission:

"I have sat here all afternoon and not once have I heard the word *woman* mentioned."

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### Lignite Coal Talk.

A DOMINION land surveyor has been out at Edson, Alberta, talking about lignite coal. He says that the Brazeau coal is nearer anthracite than bituminous. Pittsburg experts agree with him.

Two years ago it was that Brazeau got into the popular vocabulary, when Colonel Talbot, a quiet parliamentary gentleman from Belle Chasse, Quebec, returned from the knees of the Rockies with wonderful tales of new fangled coal. There was much boom talk about the Brazeau region. The CANADIAN COURIER published a great illustrated story, dealing with the Colonel's adventures. But the surveyor says that he "had to be shown." He came, he



At the Foot of the Rockies they find Lignite Coal in layers thirty feet thick.

sized up. The technical commission has been asked to report on the advisability of establishing a technical school system throughout the province. The initiative and enterprise of Manitoba in the matter of technical education is of apparent significance. The West is the land of opportunity and second chance. It is the workingman's country; it wants a workingman's education. What you can do is what counts on the prairie. Harmless erudition is at a discount. Practise and theory makes perfect.

The needs of the people in pursuits other than agriculture are to be particularly considered by the commission, which means that the government has its eye on the development of manufacturing in the mushroom towns. Artizans are to be equipped so that the factory products of the West may stand in the front row with the best.

The personnel of the commission is fairly representative. The Minister of Education is a member; so is the president of the Steamfitters' Union and the chief of the Bricklayers.

saw—he was conquered. Says the surveyor:

"I was fairly astounded by what I saw. The coal seams are so deep and solid that you can see them from either bank of the river. You don't have to dig at all. The coal is right there on the surface and, it is the hardest coal I have seen anywhere west of Edmonton."

Lignite coal is Alberta's fortune—just now potential. It is lying there under the timber and the smoking lodges of the Stoneys, waiting for the snort of the railroad engine. Edmonton sits on lignite, as does Strathcona. There are cake layers of it thirty feet thick all along the headwaters of the Saskatchewan, the place where you can also see weather made.

It is Edson which is to be the coal centre of Alberta, according to the surveyor. The G. T. P. is to send a branch down there. That will be a first step in turning potentiality into actuality. The future of Edson—he has it all laid out. When the mines begin to cough, he says that thousands of men will be employed there.

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