

# THE NEW WEST—WHAT IS IT?

*No Longer Wheat, City Lots and Oil, But Art, Education and Public Affairs*

By MAIN JOHNSON

WHAT is this New West, which is being referred to now-a-days? A few years ago the "new west" was the West itself, geographically, as we know it now. More recently the term was applied to the Peace River district. What is its significance to-day?

The New West means a country whose ideals, interests and mode of life have changed. A few years ago, quite naturally and indeed inevitably, the prairie provinces were absorbed in materialism, in buying and selling things—wheat, city lots, and, later still, oil. Of these three interests, only one remains as a potent factor in the life of the Westerner—wheat, the least materialistic of the three, for although its chief value lies in its power of being transmitted into money, yet there is a constructive idealism and an epic bigness in the cultivation of the world's crops which saves it from the contamination of sordidness.

What are the interests of Westerners to-day? For one thing, they play golf. Five or six years ago there was very little "putting" between Winnipeg and the Mountains; this year there are more golfers in proportion to the population than anywhere else in Canada, so many in fact that golf in this part of the world might almost be called democratic. For one thing, distances are comparatively short in Western cities like Regina and Edmonton, and the golf links are much closer to town, nearer the business and residential sections than in the East, with its half-million centres of population, and its secluded, inaccessible country clubs.

Even the younger set have taken up golf in the West. Young men, who have not yet gone to the war, and who, in Montreal or Toronto, would be playing tennis or yachting, are golfing in Saskatoon and Calgary and other cities of the plains and the foothills. Even newspaper men and women who, in the East are among the busiest communities in the cities, and who have scarcely time to eat, much less to play games, shoulder their sticks in the late afternoon and walk, ride or drive to the links. One of the causes of the popularity of golf in the West is the long afternoons of the northern latitudes. During midsummer, one can play at least an hour and a half later in the evening in Edmonton than in Toronto, and, therefore, one can begin that much later in the afternoon, after having plenty of time to finish the day's work.

During the temporary lull in the bounding prosperity of the West, and during the days when, even

with good crops, the rosy hue of the world has lost something of its colour, the Westerner is finding solace in the contemplation and enjoyment of the artistic buildings and environment which he created for himself in the days of easy money. At the time, he was not always thinking about the enjoyment-value of magnificent public, private and commercial edifices, wide streets and charming parks. Quite often he was making such improvements in a spirit of rivalry, and with the feeling that he must not allow any competing city to gain the ascendancy in providing spectacular signs of prosperity. To-day, in spite of the difficulty in paying for some of these adornments, they are appreciated as they never were in the hey-day of 1912.

"A heavy load to pay for these palaces?" was the typical remark of a Regina man. "Yes, they are expensive luxuries, but they make us feel contented. They make the city worth living in."

So also in Saskatoon—in that city, as elsewhere, there are public and private buildings, which, from a mere dollars and cents standpoint, could be eliminated without being missed, and if they had not been built, taxes would not have been as oppressive to-day. And yet, the typical resident of Saskatoon, as he takes you to the top of one of its skyscrapers and shows you the marvellous panorama of rich and well-built structures, will tell you that he would not give them up in spite of all the money stringency. The artistic in architecture and the solidity of civic institutions are soothing forms of consolation.

PEOPLE of the West have more leisure than they had in boom days, and more time to think of literature and art. There is quite a marked increase in the demand for standard books of the best sort, in cheap editions, and there is, also, in certain centres, a growing appreciation of painting. In Saskatchewan, this encouraging development is being fostered by the brilliant and versatile Governor of that province, Hon. G. H. Brown, who is a generous patron of the arts. His own portrait, painted by Sir Hubert Herkomer, he recently presented to the province, and the painting is hung in a most striking and original position in the delightful entrance hall of the Parliament Buildings. In Government House, His Honour has a number of valuable originals, including a Titian.

The Universities of Saskatchewan and Alberta, at Saskatoon and Edmonton (Strathcona) were begun in the boom days, but their worth was never realized so fervently nor were the people as proud of these institutions of learning as they are to-day. President Murray, of Saskatchewan, and President Torrey, of Alberta, are looked up to as men who stand for the permanent things of life, unaffected in their essence by either the low or high prices of city lots. The financial situation has undoubtedly curtailed the building programme of both these universities, but it has not stopped it completely. This is particularly true in Alberta, where a new Arts College, the finest of any of the buildings in that group up to date, is being rushed to completion for the opening of the autumn term.

BESIDES the more or less "Applied" faculties, including schools of Agriculture and demonstration farms, which are features of these Western universities, there is also an enlarging interest in the more traditional literary courses, although, for these subjects, many Western students continue to come East.

The changed West is nowhere more in evidence than in the public affairs of the prairie provinces, and in the public opinion which finds expression in the policies carried out. Not that Westerners formerly neglected to take an interest in public affairs—in spite of their absorption in business, enough of them always seemed to find sufficient time to see to it that their governments were efficient and modern. In those days, however, the interest was more or less in strictly material matters, such as markets, elevators, and co-operation. These questions are not yet in abeyance; they are still active, but they are not the chief issues. The ground has shifted, and to-day the most vital policies in the West are temperance and woman suffrage. Public opinion on the first point has already crystallized into legislation in Saskatchewan and Alberta, and is in the formative period in Manitoba and British Columbia. The second issue is not quite as far advanced, but close observers predict that within two years, probably before that, women will have the vote in Alberta and Saskatchewan, and that Manitoba will soon grant the same right.

The emergence of such definite movements in the political field as prohibition and women's suffrage goes to show vividly that in this phase of life also there has arisen a New West.

## SEEING THE GREAT FLEET

*The Only First-hand Description Ever Published of the British Navy in the North Sea*

By THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

In the London Times

Sailor, what of the debt we owe you?  
Day or night is the peril more?  
Who so dull that he fails to know you,  
Sleepless guard of our island shore?  
Safe the corn to the farmyard taken,  
Grain ships safe upon all the seas—  
Homes in peace and a faith unshaken,  
Sailor, what do we owe for these?

THESE lines (from a poem in The Times of September 16, 1914) came into my mind when from the bridge of a destroyer I saw the Grand Fleet stretched before me, the grey ships silent and ready in the grey light of the northern seas. It may perhaps serve to enforce the debt of gratitude which the nation owes to the officers and men of the Fleet if I give a short account of a memorable fortnight which, at the invitation of the Commander-in-Chief, I was recently allowed to spend among them. My desire was to bring them a message of thanks and remembrance from the Motherland and of benediction from the Mother Church which has the great majority of them under her care.

It is difficult for them to realize the value of their long-drawn vigil. Their one longing is to meet the German ships and sink them; and yet month after month the German ships decline the challenge. The men have little time, or chance or perhaps inclination to read accounts in serious journals of the invaluable service which the Navy is fulfilling by simply keeping its watch; and naval officers do not make speeches to their men.

The arrangements for the visit were made by the Commander-in-Chief and the Admirals commanding the other bases, whose guest I was. They were models of careful organization. They proved that by the Navy, whether in arranging the visit of an Archbishop or in preparing for a fight, nothing is left to chance. I wish that the masters of ecclesiastical ceremonies at home could learn some lessons from the flag captains of the Fleet. It proved to be possible to arrange great voluntary services on two Sunday afternoons and on a week-day

morning. At the first there were the Commander-in-Chief and his staff, the other Admirals, and nearly 5,000 officers and men. The ships of the Fleet were lying around, looming out of a dull grey mist—it was a most moving experience to commit that distant Fleet to the care and blessing of God. The scene of the second, bathed in sunshine, where about 3,000 officers and men were grouped, was very different. The third service, if less romantic in its setting than the first, was as a spectacle the most impressive of the three—indeed, I have never seen anything like it. Nearly 9,000 officers and men were gathered in a vast dry dock. The weather was beautiful; the acoustics of the dock were perfect. I shall never forget that sea of upturned faces frank and bronzed, the stillness with which they listened to every word, the sense of an unseen Presence in our midst.

TEN DAYS' WORK.

THERE were four Confirmation services—two of them in the flagships of the Admirals in command, attended by hundreds of men. About 180 were confirmed—warrant and petty officers, artificers, men and boys, and one or two midshipmen. One afternoon, wet and squally, I consecrated a field as a new naval cemetery. The congregation was about 1,800 men from the destroyer flotillas, who sang and listened with a true naval indifference to weather. One whole day, in a shelter extemporized as a chapel, one afternoon and one morning in churches ashore elsewhere, I spent with the chaplains in quiet thought and prayer. Every day there were visits to selected ships, to which drafts of men from neighbouring ships were sent; and there I spoke and gave God's blessing to crowds of men standing on deck or sitting among the turrets in every variety of picturesque grouping. Never again can I hope to find such keen and ready listeners. Altogether, during ten days, I gave over 40 addresses. It was impossible to feel tired in an atmosphere of such generous attentiveness and welcome.

Let me try to describe some of the impressions which this visit has left indelibly printed on my heart and mind. It is not easy. The Grand Fleet is a world apart, with its own life, its own task, its own wonderful and incommunicable spirit. It is difficult to speak of it to those who inhabit a world so different.

To share the life of the Grand Fleet even for a short time enables one to realize the sacrifices which its officers and men have made and are making for their country. We are entering the second year of the war. Let it be remembered that not for three or six, but for 12 months the Fleet has been enduring the strain of immediate readiness for battle. Almost all of its ships have been constantly at sea. They had no harbours secure from danger. They roamed ceaselessly over waste northern and western seas at full speed, often in wild weather, with the water covering the decks, in a region where the winter light lasts only a few hours, each ship moving hither and thither in the dark, her hundreds of men shiver down below. It is almost impossible to realize the perpetual strain of such an experience. Officers and men have all the responsibilities of war without the thrill and excitement of battle. Day by day they have to be ready for action. Leave is almost impossible. Many of them have not had 48 hours' leave, few of them have had more, since the war began. No men have a greater love of their homes. They have often been within reach, sometimes even within sight, of them. Yet none can be spared. Week by week they are waiting for a chance which never comes. Some of them, to the envy of their comrades, have had their day—in the Dogger Bank, the Heligoland Bight, the Falkland Islands, the Dardanelles. But for most of them "the day" is still to come. It is impossible to describe the strain of waiting for it.

THE SPIRIT OF CHEERFULNESS.

YET in spite of all they are full of cheerfulness. Every captain had the same word—nothing could be better than the spirit of the whole crew. On deck you may see officers wrestling with the mighty "medicine-ball," and men playing cricket