



Some Impressions of Winnipeg

By C. W. JEFFERYS

With Photographs and Drawings by the Author.



Picturesque Aspects of the most interesting City in Canada.

THE most interesting city in Canada to-day is Winnipeg. Next to Quebec, it is the most picturesque; but its picturesqueness consists entirely in the character of its population and not at all in any scenic features or natural beauty. And though no locality could less resemble the grey city that clings to the rocky headland of Quebec, no visitor to Winnipeg can fail to be reminded of the ancient capital. Names familiar to the lower province meet the eye upon signs, the French-Canadian facial type is not infrequent upon the streets, and just across the river in the town of St. Boniface, is a community whose entire character is that of Quebec.

It is a city of contrasts. In Winnipeg, east meets west, Canada's past rubs elbows with Canada's future, Europe crowds North America. It is as cosmopolitan as New York. The Royal Alexandra, a hotel that would fit in with Broadway or Fifth Avenue, overlooks the north end, a quarter inhabited by a population as polyglot as New York's east side. A magnificent new railroad station, with a facade as classical as a Greek temple confronts a hay-market, whose habitant farmers, clad in grey homespun, suggest a life as primitive as that of a parish on the banks of the St. Lawrence. Automobiles swerve suddenly to avoid the lumbering ox-carts piled high with wild hay. Buckboards and waggon drawn by unkempt, piebald Indian ponies, driven by Scotch half-breeds from Peguis, rattle past hansom cabs as smart as any on Piccadilly. The streets are bright with the kerchiefs and aprons of Galician and Polish peasant women; some are bright orange, some red and green, others pure white, a few are embroidered by hand in simple and striking patterns. Here and there one meets an Indian squaw, stunted, wizened, or corpulent, wrapped in a red plaid shawl, plodding patiently behind her dingy, black-clothed lord. Mingled with these, are Doukhobors in sheepskin coats, English immigrants in peaked caps, leather gaiters and riding breeches. Russians with rawhide boots and belted blouses, blonde Scandinavians, Ontario farmers, American settlers, and men with high-heeled boots, spurs and cowboy hats, from the plains of Alberta to whom Winnipeg means the East.

Main Street impresses one as consisting principally of real estate agencies and employment bureaus. These display advertisements for workmen in all the languages and dialects of Europe. One exhibits a large photograph of a group of railroad labourers at a construction camp, bearing this legend: "This is a sample of the way we feed our men. We got them their jobs. Hire with us and live high."

Everywhere buildings are being erected. Already the citizens talk of the Royal Alexandra as a thing of the past, and dilate upon the magnificence of the Canadian Northern Station and Hotel which is to rise at the other end of Main Street next year. Every day sees the long streets stretch

farther out upon the prairie. And the houses are as varied as the people. In Crescent Road and along the banks of the Assiniboine they are colonial mansions of brick and stone, surrounded by extensive grounds and trees—real trees. In the north end they are tar paper and clap board shacks. The oddest structure in Winnipeg, perhaps the oddest in Canada, is a little Greek church erected by Russian peasants just off Main Street north, in the heart of the foreign quarter. All sorts of materials have been used in its construction—planks from worn-out sidewalks, discarded tin cans, fragments of iron fence, a bench or two, old lightning rods—the contributions of a dozen junk shops.

One's lasting impressions of Winnipeg are of wide spaces, air and light; spaces which suggest that the country has room to grow—and sunlight of a brilliancy beside which our Eastern sunlight is dim and pale, and which amply justifies the term "sunny Manitoba."

The Growth of Our Towns

ONE of the grievances which the deputation from the Farmers' Association laid before the Government at Ottawa on November 16th was the growth of the towns of Canada under a protective tariff. They said that the towns had grown very much more rapidly than the rural districts. Yet they declared that Canada had a surplus of one hundred and twenty million dollars of farm products for export. It is strange, says "Industrial Canada," that these farmers cannot see that so long as they produce much more than can be consumed at home there is reason to

desire the growth of a consuming population in the towns and cities. The leaders of the Farmers' Association have no difficulty in seeing that the cities and towns of the United States are of advantage to the farmers of that country. Indeed, they are so convinced that such markets as the big manufacturing cities of the United States are advantageous to farmers that they think the chief aim of our Government should be to obtain admission to the United States markets for Canadian farm products. Why is it, then, that they are opposed to the growth of manufacturing towns in Canada?

The people of Winnipeg, Brandon, Moose Jaw, Regina, Medicine Hat, Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon, who are so proud of the rapid growth of their towns, should note that the free trade leaders of the Farmers' Association have asked the Government to lower the tariff on the ground that the towns are growing too rapidly. If Mr. Fielding would take the advice of the Farmers' Association there would very soon be no reason to complain that Canadian towns are growing too fast. On the contrary, many towns now full of life and hope and energy would become stagnant and decline in population. But the slower growth of Canadian towns would not mean a more rapid growth of Canadian rural districts.



YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY.

A half-breed farmer passing the Royal Alexandra Hotel.