

## Canada's Greatest Problem

To the Editor of The Globe: I was interested in your editorial on the decline of immigration and in Mr. Arthur Hawkes' letter "The Condition of the People Question."

The problem of unemployment will be this winter, if it is not now, the most pressing question before this country. The winter is not the time in which to deal with this question, if it is to be dealt with with any thoroughness and success. The Federal Government, if it had been at all in touch with the country's needs, should have made some move in dealing with this problem last spring. It should do so now and the cities and the Provincial Governments should see that it does, for the burden of unemployment will in the winter fall on the cities, the fact being that unemployment is in its effects a city problem requiring a Dominion solution.

A system of national labor exchanges would be desirable, but it would not solve the problem. The trouble is much deeper than the maladjustment between the job and the man.

The restriction of speculation, especially speculation in land, would be a move in the right direction, but neither would that deal with the matter successfully. We would still have to rely on individual initiative for the development of our agriculture.

In my opinion the most fundamental discoverable cause of unemployment lies in the overdevelopment of secondary production and the under-development of primary production.

Manufacturing and the manufacturing centres, the cities, have developed much faster than agriculture and the agricultural districts, and yet manufacturing is dependent on agriculture for its raw material and this country very largely for its consumption demand.

Our immigration, left to itself or to the gentle mercies of the railroad contractor and the "assimilated" foreigner, is going to the cities and to manufacturing or construction. We are over-constructed and over-manufactured and we are under-agricultured. The problem of unemployment is the problem of redirecting our immigrant and immigration toward agriculture.

The majority of our non-English speaking immigrants, with the exception of the Jewish, were farmers and the children of farmers at home. Our British and Jewish immigration is the only urban immigration that we are getting. Why doesn't this rural immigration go to the farms?

First, because the railroads needed them and saw to it that they got them.

Second, because they have little capital, don't understand the language and don't know how to secure a homestead.

Third, because they are left for guidance to the Canadianized immigrant, whose business it is to exploit them.

Fourth, because in the city they can find their own people.

Fifth, because they have no pleasant memories of farming as it was at home, where they were practically villeins on the lord's estate.

Sometimes they want to make money quickly and go home.

There are many other reasons, but these will be sufficient. Many of them would be glad to go to the farm under certain conditions. It is the business of the Government to supply the conditions.

Our homestead methods are inadequate. They are based on an individualistic point of view, which is no longer tenable, especially in dealing with people who do not speak our language.

Frederick the Great of Prussia was the first Monarch of modern times to deal intelligently with the problem of land colonization. His problem was superficially the opposite of ours, but fundamentally the same. He had to prevent the depopulation of rural Germany by emigration. We must populate rural **Canada** by immigration.

Frederick's plan of land colonization is worth considering in this country. It involved a new agricultural credit system, an educational campaign in scientific agriculture and the actual establishment of agricultural colonies, the draining of swamps, the improvement of roads and markets, etc.

It is not sufficient at this stage in our development merely to permit homesteading; it is necessary for the Government to establish agricultural colonies and to place the immigrant in these colonies. The Government must go into farming; set aside tracts of land, build villages, taking mortgages from the occupants and allowing them to pay them off as they are able; loan money for machinery, stock, etc., appoint managers for the colonies, graduates of Guelph, to oversee and instruct in the use of machinery, rotation of crops and fertilizing.

The Government must put the immigrant on the land, and see to it that he is given every opportunity of becoming an efficient and independent farmer.

There are thousands of **foreigners** in our cities now, there will be thousands more in the winter, and there are thousands coming in every year, who are farmers and who are in the cities because it is the easiest place to strand. They should be on the farms, for their own sake, for the sake of the cities and for the sake of the country at large.

If our democratic Government were as wise as the despotic monarchy of Frederick the Great of Prussia we should long ago have had a colonization system of real significance and should not to-day be groaning under the burden of inflated values in things and deflated values in humans.

The University Settlement, Toronto.