

Farm Labor And Immigration

We have a scarcity of labor on the farms of Ontario. Here, as in the West, we must seek new sources of supply. Very many of those who constitute the unemployed foreign elements in the cities were engaged in agriculture before they came to the Dominion. They are, however, stranded in the cities because they cannot speak the English language and are ignorant of Canadian methods and conditions. If, as the Unemployment Commission contends, we had Labor Bureaux which could deal with these people in their own language, and if they could be assisted to learn English, the problem of unemployment would be mitigated and a far greater supply of farm labor would become available. Moreover, many of these people would themselves become land-holders and their children desirable and prosperous Canadian citizens. It is seldom that the soil breeds unrest or disaffection. In the cities the groups which threaten law and order collect. Nothing worse could befall Canada than that foreign elements should gather in the centres of population, and constitute reserves of cheap labor for monopolistic corporations and the raw material of political-bosses and demagogues. But if we do not mean to develop these conditions we must organize immigration more wisely and maintain a more active and sympathetic supervision of immigrants after they reach the country.