

As spring approaches, the question of work for the unemployed becomes more and more acute. Those who remember the terrible happenings in Lancashire during the American Civil War, when close upon 200,000 men were known to be out of work in that county alone, will tremble with apprehension. At that time the philanthropical spirit of Britain arose nobly to the rescue, no less a sum than \$9,500,000 being publicly subscribed. This fund was so well administered that although the distress lasted for a period of five years, \$650,000 remained in the hands of the trustees, and was expended in the erection of a convalescent home in Lancashire. Things are different in Canada to what they were in England at that time. The country was not at war, and although prices were high and the suffering was widespread, people had not been called upon for aid to the almost innumerable works of charity that they are now. While some of the money subscribed was used for direct relief, the bulk of it was invested in public works that commanded the greatest amount of individual labor.

It is a fair estimate to presume that at this moment in Canada there are 100,000 unemployed. Mayor Martin of Montreal has placed the number of out-of-works in that city at 45000. In Toronto there are known to be half as many. In the big western cities especially Winnipeg and Vancouver, there are probably another twenty or twenty-five thousand. So that we are not long in arriving at the total suggested. It is not a question of statistics, however, so much as the need for instant, resolute, and sustained action. Work must be found. It is not a matter of "I cannot dig and to beg I am ashamed." Practically all are willing to work. The trouble is that they mainly belong to the constructive trades. There are, of course, many clerks, operatives in factories, and salesmen and women among them, but the hardest to be suited are those who have been employed on buildings and railway works, which are now almost at a standstill.

In the face of this state of affairs the land is crying for labor. One thing that can be done is to separate the wheat from the chaff and endeavor first of all to employ the wheat, giving preference as far as reasonable to the men who have others to support. For this purpose, and in fact for treatment of the whole situation, committees should be formed in every city and town, and registration embodying suitability strictly kept. Then such public works as are in any way possible should be proceeded with. When we arrive at the matter of farm labor we come to the very crux of the situation. The large majority of the unemployed have never seen a farm except as they have been travelling past. To another section the work is uncongential. Unhappily, it is frequently shown that even under stress, men and women will not do work for which they feel completely suited. But these cannot be left to starve. They must be employed, but how is a matter for the committees to decide. As to the demand of the land, farmers must be appealed to to be as patient as they can, and to be as lenient and generous as possible to such laborers as they may obtain. As has been said over and over again, the times are exceptional, and not only call upon us, but demand of all of us, that we shall practice self-denial and thus bear in some measure a share of the common burden.