

## Editorial

The investigation by the Provincial Commission of the Kapuskasing settlement has turned out mischievous and decidedly harmful to the whole North Country. If we are to judge from the conclusions, which the outside press has drawn from the evidence adduced, but perhaps this evidence, even if acceptable to the Commission, and apparently without regard to the incongruity of it in the light of the flourishing settlements scattered all along the railway over which they travelled, had the Commission been acquainted with the fact that at the time when the first complaints came out of the Kapuskasing colony, the Cochrane Branch of the Great War Veterans Association took steps to immediately investigate these complaints. It did not take them long to ascertain that there was nothing to it, and they washed their hands of the whole affair.

It was then that the politicians stepped in and saw the grand opportunity of making political capital out of it, and the dissatisfied element among the settlers, at that time vastly in the minority, instead of being shown their own deficiencies and admonished to overcome them, were petted and encouraged in their unreasonable agitation so that finally they completely forgot the basic admonition of life: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

Now the situation has reached the climax by having become a menace threatening the entire economic existence of the colony, thereby crying for the employment of heroic measures as a remedy. The ordinary course of event which has governed human institutions and humanity throughout history, the survival of the fittest, can for obvious reasons not find application here, even if in the first place the men went into the scheme absolutely of their own free will and must, at least in the specially aggravated cases, have recognized their total unfitness for pioneer life right from the start. Under the very conditions calling forth this settlement scheme, there should be more than official sympathy for the failures. They should at least be given the opportunity of some other calling in another sphere, even at the risk of the worst failures remaining failures, as would by no means be precluded.

For the good of the country here, the worst that could happen would be to attempt to keep these failures here through temporary assistance and more aid. Any sacrifice made by the Government to take these failures away from here immediately would be cheap in the end, but there is no need of talking of sacrifices. The Government could easily compensate these unfortunate failures for the improvements made on their lands, at a fair valuation, and take back the lands and have them put on the market for sale. Every one of these homesteads would eagerly be snapped up by bona fide settlers. With farms having changed hands around Moonbeam, only a few miles away from Kapuskasing, at prices ranging from \$4,000 to \$10,000, according to the clearing and improvements done on them, there can be no risk whatever in the Government deciding on a policy of taking back the lands at Kapuskasing by allowing a fair compensation for work performed on them either in the way of clearing or other improvements.

But certainly there is no reason whatever to have the country blamed for the failure of the individual, and it is to be hoped that this injustice, as

reports of the evidence, that such a strong protest has been lodged here.

As was perhaps to be expected, the Toronto Globe suffered another violent spasm in an almost a column long editorial comment on the Kapuskasing inquiry, which appeared in last Saturday's issue.

In view of the eminently fair and exhaustive report by a special correspondent whom the Toronto Star recently sent up to view conditions on the spot, when those of the settlers whose energy and vision had made the settlement scheme an unqualified success, were given ample opportunity to freely express themselves, thereby giving conclusive proof that impotency of the individual and not lack of opportunity had made the failures, it seems almost absurd for the Globe to throw a doubt on "whether farming under any system can be rewarded in so northerly a part of the Province."

Quite naturally no settlement scheme here, or anywhere else for that matter, can be made a get-rich-quick scheme. Success will always depend on the measure of unflinching effort and unremitting energy of the individual settler. No man can throw potatoes on spruce boughs and expect to sit back and reap a crop. The land must be prepared and put in good shape for cultivation, which all requires time and patience.

If the Globe has really any doubts about the success of farming "in so northerly a part of the Province," we would advise the sending up of a competent correspondent, so as to be able to form an intelligent judgment on the conditions and ambitions of this "so northerly part of the Province." The Globe certainly would not then have fallen into the error of calling the Kapuskasing colony "a remote outpost, planted with the design of beginning the colonization on a large scale of the new territory opened up by the Transcontinental Railway."

There have been prosperous and flourishing settlements along the Transcontinental Railway as far as Hearst, which is about 130 miles west of Cochrane, before the necessity of conceiving a Kapuskasing settlement scheme was ever thought of. These older settlements were started under the most adverse conditions, yet they succeeded without the splendid aid which was given the Kapuskasing colony.

That the settlement in general was slow is explainable through the lack of roads and the almost universal antipathy these days to pioneer life, but perhaps in a large measure it is also due to the lack of enthusiasm shown by the press of the Globe's caliber in the wonderful potentialities of Ontario's great hinterland and to the preference emphasized for the "millions of arable acres" which contain "the large and flourishing settlements in the Rainy River Valley, in the country around Port Arthur and Fort William, in the Sudbury district, and in the great Temiskaming country which the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario Railway was built to serve," the latter undoubtedly meant for the stretch between New Liskeard and Englehart which, as far as the almost unlimited area of arable land along the Transcontinental is concerned, has only the advantage of being a few years ahead in settlement, while our great clay belt here on this side of the height of land has the vastly greater advantage of a more rolling formation, which facilitates the natural drainage and advances settlement in a shorter space of time.