

foot than land occupied by prisoners should be worth per acre. With unobjectionable employment offering for one hundred of our prisoners or thereabouts, operating on public account and about the prison, we have still three hundred unemployed. Would it be a satisfactory solution if we had somewhere convenient to the city and easily accessible by railway a farm of three hundred or four hundred acres with the institution on it?

Properly directed, how far would this farm go towards giving employment to these three hundred prisoners? How far would it go towards maintaining them and maintaining other public institutions of the Province in this city from the growth of the farm?

THROWS OUT A HINT.

We have in Northern Ontario a stretch of country with lock-ups maintained by the Province at different intervals over a stretch of eight or nine hundred miles. They are many in number, and the Province maintains them. To bring our prisoners from that territory here frequently means a trip of from three to twelve hundred miles each way—the bailiff going for the prisoner, both coming back, the Province buying the prisoner a ticket home on his release, and all this for a sentence anywhere between six months and two years, and averaging, as a fact, less than eight months. Could we not have in that section of the Province a prison that would be carried on as an adjunct to the Central Prison? There is land there at not too great cost. There are roads there to be built. There is work to be done and much of it that surely would not invite protest, and would have a great reformatory value.

These are the questions, without more, that the Government is considering to-day. These are the questions upon which the Government will have taken its position before the House meets again. There is much in the conditions here that makes for this solution. The value of the prison grounds themselves is but one item. The short term of the sentences takes away the inducement to escape that is before the long-term man. Where would he escape to? To the other side? They don't want him. If we were anxious enough to get him back we could get him. I have little doubt that the prisoners (mostly first term men and young, and all with short sentences) could safely be utilized at outdoor work on the farm, and to some extent on the highways in this part of the Province, but to a greater extent a like work in the northern part, and that, too, without any menace to the community.

Some one objects and says our climate is against this. There may be something in this, but not so much as at first sight would appear. States of the Union with harsher climates adopt it successfully; besides with one-quarter of the work indoors the manufacture on public account, as I have mentioned, would carry over the severe end of the year. The solution indicated we have not adopted, but we have considered and will take further pains to investigate how far it will fit the conditions here.

AN EXPERIMENT.

In this connection, sir, we have already done some work in this Province that has a bearing as indicating how far the prisoners may be trusted under proper conditions. When we took office we found a Mercer