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PATENTS

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Matters of Canadian Citizenship.

Back to the People.

BY E. K. MARSHALL, M. A.

When the people really and more directly rule in Canada there should be less need of delayed legislation and less power committed into the hands of irresponsible law-makers. As a matter of fact much of our legislation has to do, directly or indirectly, with what is known as "the Big Interests," and not with what really concerns the welfare of the people generally. A great deal of the stress and strain put upon the commercial nerve and business fibre of our people is due to prejudiced law-making, or to ignorance of or gross disregard for the inevitable effect of legislation. Many men have enacted laws with other objects in view than the passing of the legislation and its effects upon trade.

It is a charge against nobody in particular to say this. Many good men, who were concerned in the transactions not only admit, but claim as their justification, that they were compelled to vote this in order to prevent that. They were obliged to make laws; that was their business at the capital.

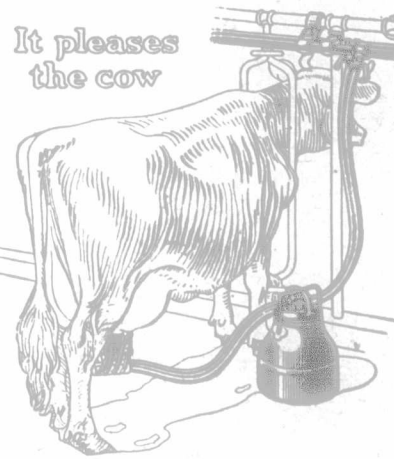
The way has been open for any crank or scoundrel to propose any law which would serve any temporary purpose of his own or the interests which he represented. If he could make a fortune or secure unusual privileges for interests with which he happened to be identified whilst the country's powers and resources were plundered, why, no matter; the people rarely seemed to care and everyone was out for himself! Schemes were pressed upon our parliaments, provincial and federal, which, if carried out, meant reckless disregard for the general public and careful attention to the interests of special concerns. At some future day it will seem almost incredible that the vast revenues, resources, rights and privileges of the public were in our time left exposed to the caprice, the whims, the treachery, of men who were elected to office with but little regard to their training and fitness for the management of public utilities. A business which would puzzle the wisest men and mayhap exhaust the resources of the most experienced, is committed to men who may have no experience at all, but who are not seized with the sense of responsibility to the people. And then we wonder what is the matter anyway with our railway situation, our domestic trade condition, our banking system or the tariff! Our own wonder is that we stumble along so well and contrive so well to maintain so high an average of prosperity, even if we are rapidly expending some of our rare capital resources.

It is also a wonder that under the old system so many legislators were able to maintain their integrity and keep true to their trust (and be re-elected). None but those who have passed through the experience can know what pressure for privilege is brought to bear on these public men. Whilst this does not excuse the evil legislation that has marked so much of our federal and provincial governments and relieve our representatives of their responsibilities to the future, it must be confessed that the electorate, too, has a grave responsibility in the matter. We will pray for the time when the people shall really rule in Canada, but let us also pray that the people shall be ready to rule when that time comes, more fully. The wonderful awakening of public sentiment in recent years is an earnest of the better time coming.

"Back to the people," then, may be the signal for us to leave the wilderness of exclusive legislation in which we have long wandered, and may be an invitation to make a new advance along the line of better civilization where social justice shall be more fully observed, and power and peace, freedom and trust, cease to be mere platitudes and become actualities.

"In the shade of the old apple tree
Where the snow and the rain blow so free,
It's no place to store
The binder and mower
And implements there that you see;
For the rust and the rot you'll agree,
Are worse than hard usage would be,
And the paint that they wore
Is a shade, nothing more—
Just the shade of the old apple tree."

It pleases
the cow



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(The Sanitary Trap is not shown in the part of the Milker installation pictured here. It is placed between the Pulsometer Pump and the first line of stanchions)



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