

The article which this young lady enclosed reads as follows:

Canada's New Problem

Alien Menace in the Golden West

Bad Old Days of the Gold Rushes Revived

("News of the World" Special)

Canadian wheat farmers on the rich corn lands of Alberta and Saskatchewan are seriously perturbed by the continued drought which threatens their harvest, and which may spell ruin to a number of settlers who have laboured hard and sunk their capital in creating farms on the wide Western prairies. Only in scattered districts where there may have been local showers will there be any wheat crop worth harvesting. To add to the troubles of British settlers a number of Russians, Galicians, and other migrants from eastern Europe have recently swarmed over the western portions of Canada. They have been encouraged by the Dominion authorities, who, it is alleged, have not exercised due care in their selection, with the result that many districts are becoming unfit for decent Britishers to reside in. Complaint is made that the authorities do not trouble to inquire into the character of these people, so long as they can prove that they have financial resources sufficient to take up holdings. There is a large settlement of these undesirables around the town of Vegreville, which was until recently a prosperous community of English-speaking yeomen, but which is rapidly degenerating into a hotbed of vice and lawlessness such as characterised the mining camps of other settlements during the hectic days of gold rushes some fifty years ago. Gambling hells, gin palaces, and dancing saloons have made Vegreville and other towns the haunt of every grade of alien rascal in search of "a good time and easy money." Cunning frauds by "real estate" tricksters have resulted in scores of settlers being cheated in the purchase of farms. Illicit stills remain unchecked, and commercial morality in these districts has almost reached vanishing point. Canadian police are too busy to bother much about such matters, as they are fully occupied in dealing with serious crimes of violence and outrage that have occurred since the influx from eastern Europe. Indeed, matters have reached a point when the police have been glad of the aid of a number of Canadian ex-service men, who settled in the area immediately after the war, and have recently banded together to put down the worst forms of violent crime and so afford mutual protection against the criminal propensities of these alien ruffians. Former members of that famous corps—the Alberta Dragoons—have recently tracked down one of the worst gangs of Galician horse thieves and treated them to that rough-and-ready justice which, it is hoped, will have convinced them of the error of their ways, as they fled in terror across the open country after being stripped and flogged by the angry troopers.

Mr. BENNETT: Who was the author of that?

Mr. LUCHKOVICH: It appeared in the News of the World, London, England, and was reprinted subsequently in many Canadian papers. One editor in Edmonton had the decency to make this comment upon it:

[Mr. Luchkovich.]

Police officials in Edmonton, both provincial police and Royal Canadian Mounted Police don't even consider these ridiculous misstatements worthy of answer.

Mayor Holden of Vegreville, over the long distance telephone Thursday morning, expressed a keen desire to get his hands on the fiction writer responsible for the article. "Every man in Alberta knows that the town of Vegreville is as quiet and law-abiding as there is anywhere in Canada," he declared heatedly. "Our district is largely settled by Galicians and Ukrainians, but if you know of any better citizens of Canada I'd like to meet 'em."

Commissioner Bryan of the Alberta provincial police is surprised to find how many "gin palaces and gambling hells" exist in a town so well policed as Vegreville, and in which there is so little crime. This kind of nonsense he described the British paper's articles as can't be printed in a polite newspaper like the Journal.

Superintendent James Ritchie of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police left the city to-day on an inspection trip to northern posts, but mounted police officials laughed merrily at the heart-breaking story of the old members of the "Alberta Dragoons" who have banded together, much to the relief of the police, to round up "Galician horse thieves."

The story to any person who knows Vegreville and other towns is altogether too ridiculous for anything but derisive laughter. It is quoted merely as the worst example yet of the length to which writers, ignorant of conditions, will go in making "copy" of the "penny-a-line" type, and of the manner in which certain newspapers will grasp at such articles without first assuring themselves of the veracity of the statements made.

I do not know who the irresponsible person was that put this article in the News of the World, but whoever did certainly did not do any good to the inhabitants of Canada; but I do know that when people occupying responsible positions in Canada make such statements as the one made before the immigration commissioner by Bishop Lloyd in Prince Albert recently, I think it is about time that such people should be taken to task.

I have proven by figures that the newcomer in Canada is not as criminal as some people would like us to believe. I had intended to deal with this matter at greater length, but I do not wish to delay the committee. There are several things that I had intended to say in connection with assimilation. It is said that inter-marriage is possibly the greatest test of assimilation, and in support of this contention, having in view the proposition that we should start from the top down rather than the bottom up I think it would be a mighty fine thing at the present time, when we are on the eve of an election, if the Prime Minister chose from among the beautiful central European belles at Prince Albert a desirable helpmate to cheer him on in the forthcoming campaign.