

hundreds of thousands of newly arrived immigrants—the majority of them men in the prime of life—each in his anxiety to get a start in the new land willing to put up with any conditions however unfavourable, or to accept any wages however low, has made it extremely difficult to secure proper industrial standards. Sanitation, housing, safety, hours of labour, regularity of employment, industrial insurance and similar matters which are now acknowledged to be essential to the general welfare, have received scant consideration in Canada.

The “rural problem”—the overcoming of the isolation of rural life, the provision of greater social opportunities, the general adoption of the principles of scientific farming, the organization of co-operative enterprises, the adjustment of the agricultural industry to the demands of the modern commercial world, the re-direction of education—this many-sided and far-reaching problem becomes very formidable indeed when the country is being settled by newcomers who have not even a common language.

The establishment of sound and suitable public institutions, the development of high political ideals and a “social conscience” would not have been easy in a country which consisted of scattered communities of people trained in individualistic habits of thought and activity. The presence of alien and unassimilated elements has aggravated the difficulty and tended to retard the development of a sense of community fellowship, or corporate responsibility, and of devotion to a social ideal. The general indifference to the conduct of public affairs, the lack of adequate means for the expression of disinterested public opinion, the difficulty of united action, has afforded an opportunity for the baser elements in our public life to gain a position of influence that has degraded the public life and service of Canada.

Undoubtedly the immigrant has thus helped to create our problems—as, it should not be forgotten, he has helped to create our wealth. It is not so clearly realized that the immigrant must help to solve these problems and may indeed take a foremost place in the bringing in of the better day.