

of these problem areas of Manitoba. I say good fortune because I feel that during this period I have had the opportunity of getting to know and understand many of these people in South Eastern Manitoba. I have also had the opportunity to talk about Southern Manitoba to many people who have not had the same opportunity as I. It disturbs me greatly that so many people have the misconceptions they have about the people in South Eastern Manitoba, and other problem areas.

I seldom get into a discussion on people who live in problem areas, whether they are rural or urban, that I don't hear such statements as "those people are shiftless, lazy, aren't interested in improving themselves, are happy in their existence", and many more. Some of the scientifically minded people will quote statistics and studies to prove their point. There is always the implication that these people were just born that way, and nothing can be done about it.

There are two basic factors that influence what each of us can do in our life.

1. the hereditary factor.
2. the environment in which we live.

There is no scientific information to indicate that racial background accounts for differences between people in their capacities; neither is there any scientific information to indicate that there are differences by geographic regions.*

Someone will no doubt be willing to grant that this is correct, but will quickly add that those with enough brains and initiative have all left these areas, and therefore we are left with those with less intelligence, initiative, etc. etc.

At one time this was a widely accepted theory. However, more recent studies of migration indicate that there is no selectivity on the basis of hereditary capacity of migrants. O.K. so the inherent capacity of these people is just as high as in other places, but their aspirations aren't as high, i.e. they aren't as interested in improving their conditions as other people. On this point, it is easy to find studies to indicate that sons and daughters of successful farmers have higher aspirations than those of less successful farmers. However, occupational aspirations of children are always related to the occupations of those that they are familiar with; namely the occupations of their parents. When we compare the aspirations or desires of groups of children of successful and unsuccessful farmers we find that each group wants to exceed their parents by about the same amount. It seems to me that this is a much more significant comparison than one based on the absolute levels of aspiration.

What about the statement that these people are happy in their way of life let's not disturb them. This one seems to be a difficult one to refute. Upon casual acquaintance it would be difficult to escape this conclusion. This is because this human mind of ours is a wonderful mechanism that permits us to rationalize our problems. When we are unable to attain a desired goal or objective after repeated attempts we soon rationalize that we didn't want it anyway. Thus from outward appearances, we seem content. If we were not able to do this so effectively, a good many of us would have been in a mental institution long ago. In other words, all of us, regardless of our position in life, are able to rationalize our positions. I know a number of University professors who are apparently perfectly happy with their lot in life—yes, and even some civil servants.

I hope that this has been enough to establish that there are no inherent differences between people living in different parts of the province.

If there are no significant differences because of hereditary factors, what about the environmental factors?

* For a scientific discussion this statement needs detailed clarification, but for a general audience such details could not be included.