

*The Address—Mr. Veniot*

the country, because of the destructive principle that it fosters in supporting idleness, whether forced or voluntary, as opposed to the natural law of compensation, of work and production.

Mind in action through creative, constructive thinking, is the greatest force in the world. Work, production, whether in the intellectual or material field, is mind's greatest manifestation, the basic principle of all human success and economic progress, one of the fundamental laws of the universe; and idleness, whether voluntary or forced, is the bane of humanity and the ruin of economic structure. The man who thinks in terms of work or production forges ahead; he who thinks in terms of idleness stagnates, rusts and deteriorates.

Horace Greeley aptly said:

The darkest hour in any man's life is when he sits down to plan how to get money without earning it.

Commenting on this statement, the editor of one of America's largest magazines adds:

And the darkest hour in the life of any government is when it plans to pay him on these terms. The curse of the dole laid the ancient Roman empire in ruins. The dole then, as to-day, was a soporific that prolonged the disease instead of curing it. The dole then, as now, was never expected to lift a man out of the dole class, but rather to maintain him in a state of permanent pauperism.

In 1930 the British and the Canadian medical associations held a joint convention at Winnipeg. Lord Dawson, the king's physician, and one of our distinguished guests, was asked his opinion on the dole in England as a relief measure for unemployment. He expressed himself as follows:

The dole was the greatest calamity that hit England since the world war. It made of our labourers liars, perjurers, thieves and lazy men, from which state of demoralization it will take England a generation to recover.

It was the consideration and recognition of the basic principles just mentioned that prompted my home town of Bathurst in 1933 to discontinue direct relief or the dole as a means of taking care of its so-called unemployed; and the government of New Brunswick at the present time, inspired by its leader, Premier Dysart, and members of the cabinet, is putting forth all its efforts to suppress direct relief and the dole as rapidly as possible. I said "so-called" unemployed a minute ago; for we in Bathurst discovered that direct relief was being made a racket, and that fully ninety per cent of those who were asking for assistance were not entitled to it, twelve hundred out of a population of 3,360 of our people being on direct relief. On the

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first of May of that year we voted out direct relief and adopted the slogan "no work, no bread" from the town of Bathurst; if any unemployed asking for assistance refused to work, we refused to give him bread at the expense of the taxpayer. We separated ourselves from both provincial and federal governments as far as direct relief funds were concerned. In order to overcome the objection to using direct relief funds for the payment of wages, we carried on by ourselves, out of our own resources, giving our people work such as shovelling snow, hauling gravel—anything so long as we made them work, paying them twenty cents an hour for ten hours a day five or six days a week. Our relief problem ceased overnight, so to speak. We saved ten thousand dollars a year for the town of Bathurst, and an equal sum for each of the provincial and federal governments. Our insistence on some return, some personal effort, some show of good will from all who asked for assistance, instead of allowing them to wallow in idleness, soon reduced our municipal relief load to the near zero mark, because the unemployed man was forced to reason the matter out for himself in this way: "If the town forces me to work forty odd hours a week anyway, I might as well work on my own hook and do better for myself." Henceforth our men found ways and means of standing on their own feet and becoming self-supporting. Since that time, we have not had a single man on relief. We have only the ordinary indigents, the maimed and sick that we always have had and always will have with us.

I do not mean to imply that every municipality in Canada can achieve the same results with the same methods, but I do contend—and there is no getting away from this psychological fact—that to-day, with the dole in existence, you cannot get the ordinary labourer to look for work, let alone do an honest day's work, so long as he knows that the dole dangles in front of his nose, so long as he can get his sustenance by the mere extending of his hand. If our governing bodies expect to pull out of this morass of unemployment, our only hope lies in getting people back to work consciousness, compelling them to give some personal return for the assistance they receive, by cutting out this panhandling, this racketeering, this subsidizing of idleness, this sponging on the public treasury, on which so many persons have existed dishonestly for the last five or six years.

Hon. members of this house know that in every district where direct relief exists there are vultures preying on the misery of the people; there are owners or managers of