

— No. 15. —

EXTRACT from the *Quebec Gazette*, dated 6 March 1833, enclosed in Lord Aylmer's Letter of 7th March 1833.

## MILITARY PENSIONERS.

THE Emigrant Society of Quebec has made a report on the subject of the military pensioners who have commuted their pensions for a sum of money, and have come out to Canada. The subject, besides the natural feeling which the misfortunes of these people have excited, is of importance, as connected with the question of the immigration of persons who have not been supported by their own means at home.

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Several thousands of these pensioners, including their families, have come out during the last two years. They must have brought with them, or received here since their arrival, probably about 100,000 *l.*, and we believe that few will assert that they are not now generally in a worse condition than they could possibly have been at home.

The extent of the delusion under which they, as well as the British Government, have been acting, is astonishing; for there is no one who will say that either they or the British Government contemplated the fate that has overtaken them.

We have said, and we repeat it, that no one is fit for settling on land in Canada but those who have been brought up to agricultural labour, or been in the habit of placing no dependence on any thing but their own labour and care; that greater labour and care is required of the new settler in Lower Canada to ensure success than at home, and particularly a stronger habit of self-command, the power of resisting the many temptations to which a change of locality, a change of companions and circumstances expose him; and we say that these cannot be supplied by any advantages of capital, nor by any regulations, nor by any means that can be devised and executed; that every hope held out to the contrary is deceptive, and ends in supporting useless agents, the suffering of the emigrants, and burthening the country. We believe these pensioners, the military settlements, and the whole history of settlements in America and elsewhere, will support our position better than the most lengthened arguments.

The first thing that ought to be told to every emigrant to America is, "You are going, or are come to a country where nothing but labour will support you, where care and self-control are more necessary than ever. If you have money with you, you will be in danger of losing it, or it will 'make itself wings.' If you contract debts, you will be ruined; and you will see the man, who had not a farthing when he landed, rising over your head, and he and his family thriving, while you and your family are sinking down to a state of hopeless misery and degradation. Trust to your own labour and care, and in a kind Providence, but in nothing else."

Although we are confident that no one of these pensioners who has come to Canada has been compelled to commute his pension, although we believe that the Government has given a value for the amount which would have purchased a life annuity equal to the pension, yet we think it has not altogether discharged its duty to these people: why was a pension granted at first, instead of a sum of money? was it not because it was known that the habits of these men, formed in the long period of military service in which they had been engaged, render them unfit to secure their future permanent subsistence with a sum of money? was it not that the honour of the nation required that those who fought its battles in many a bloody field should not be suffered, upon any contingency, to be reduced to beg their bread from door to door, a melancholy example to those who might hereafter be called upon to hazard every thing for the support of the national character? The Government took upon itself the trust of guardians to these people, no longer fit to take care of themselves; and it ought not to have co-operated in the delusion of which they are the victims. We think it is still bound in honour to do something for the survivors, and to assuage, in some measure, the sufferings to which it has inconsiderately contributed.