

SUGGESTION TO RURAL MUNICIPALITIES.

The problem of immigration has been left in the hands of Dr. Page of Quebec, and at this stage requires no comment from me, but this I would point out, that when hostilities in Europe have ceased there will be a large emigration of Britishers to Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada in proportion to the inducements held out, and it is up to this country to show what it is made of; otherwise our immigration will be overbalanced by foreigners. At the present moment over four millions of hardy men are living in the open air. When the war is over these men will not want to return to sedentary occupations. They will want the open life of the country. Those Britishers who do come here with their families will not come empty handed by any means, so that they will be in a position to pay for the best, and this brings me to still another suggestion, particularly to rural municipalities. As is well known trench life, though exacting in many ways, is at least very social and if British soldier immigrants are to be held in our country districts a decent communal life must be provided for them, otherwise they will migrate to cities. My suggestion is that rural councils become the leaders in a social movement in their respective districts, for which the school houses can be so easily utilized. There is no doubt about the value of the school being the centre of social activity. We must realize that these men in coming to Canada with their families will not be particularly anxious to make their fortune at the expense of their mental discomfort. Life to-day is made up of something more than mere working from sunrise to sundown, and the sooner the powers that be recognize the fact, and act on it, the better it will be for material as well as social Canada.

Civic Education.

Another phase of municipal responsibility, that one might bring forward at this convention is the

civic education of our children. Everything seems to be taught in Canada with the exception of citizenship—that is instruction in the meaning of government. Some time back when the Journal suggested an elementary knowledge on the subject being given we were inundated with all kinds of letters from our school authorities, some of them very indignant at the mere suggestion that they neglected civics, and to impress us with our treason, sent in their syllabi which were so heavy reading that we felt sorry for the kiddies having to wade through them, and we could quite understand why our future citizens knew so little of our system of government when they left school to face the world. And all that we did suggest in the first place was a reader giving in an interesting form and in simple language, the meaning of government. Some day when we get rich, we will publish under the auspices of the U. C. M. such a reader, which, though simple, will at least give the boy or girl some knowledge of why the policeman is so essential, and why mayors and aldermen are even necessary.

I have but touched on one or two phases of the responsibility of municipal councils which are outside the purely administrative one of the levying of taxes and the building of public works, and other phases will occur to you gentlemen from your own experience in the council chamber — phases that are essential to the well being of the community. I have not gone into details because my time is short and your patience limited, and further our Journal has been hammering at Municipal responsibility and preparedness since the war commenced, and with some results if only from the friendly criticism that we have secured from municipal executives from all over Canada, but I would urge upon every civic authority to rise to their great opportunity in making this great Dominion of Canada a veritable paradise for those who will be coming home shortly and also for those blood relations who will want to come straight from the fields of Flanders to the fields of Canada.

The Municipality and the Immigrant

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If I have any apology to offer for having accepted the honor of your invitation to address such an important meeting as that of the U. C. M., in connection with immigration, it is that, before all, being a convinced partisan of certain reforms demanded by the inefficiency of our methods of inspection, I am the more deeply impressed with the role incumbent to the Municipalities under such conditions. This is why I have taken as the title of my humble contribution:

"The Municipality and the Immigrant."

I regret that through some misunderstanding you have been led to expect that I had some authoritative pronouncement to make regard-

ing the distribution of immigrants which is yet a matter of much speculation in the United States, where immigration has received from the various governments, municipal, state and federal, a great deal more attention that has been the case in so far, in this country, and all efforts in that direction has not yet resulted to any great extent in satisfactory results. Suffice it to say that "it may be summed in the saying of ex-president Roosevelt that we must first exclude the undesirable and distribute the desirable; unless we do both, nothing will be gained."

There is, in a nutshell, the social and economic aspect of our national problems of immigration. If you glance at our immigration statistics it looks much as if in Canada the proposition of Roosevelt had been reversed. We distribute and then exclude, which means that the filtering of that big and interesting stream, temporarily interrupted by war, which has added to our population during the last ten or twelve years about one immigrant to every the last ten or twelve years (about one immigrant to every five or six people), is not done on the other side of the Atlantic; not on shipboard, where the greatest opportunities can be afforded to ship surgeons for picking our future rack stock if population is going to be doubled within the next ten years through immigration, according to certain prophecies, nor at the Canadian seaports, where the main governmental machinery is installed for the purpose of official inspection; but in the Municipalities, right in the heart of the country.

In support of this, let us learn from official figures taken from the report of Dr. P. H. Bryce, Chief Medical