

talk about there being plenty of land. A large portion is reserved for school purposes, the Hudson's Bay Company has a nice little slice of 7,000,000 acres, and other landed monopolies of one kind and another may be counted by the dozen, to say nothing of the large acres held by private speculators. These lands already withdrawn from the public domain are largely the pick and choice of the country. When the water surface and lands not valuable for agriculture are counted out, the portion of the public domain still undisposed of will not be so large as is generally supposed.

But it makes no difference what amount of land remains, the granting of lands to corporations or private speculators is iniquitous in principle. Were the quantity of land ten times as great as it is, there would still be every reason for denouncing the policy. The public lands should be held for the people. There is no use in trying to encourage settlement, and then following up a policy which will effectually block it. There is no use in squandering money to bring in immigrants, and then adopt a policy of creating huge landed monopolies to drive the settlers out of the country. The recent census returns were not satisfactory in point of increase in our population. They indicate that some changes in our public policy are necessary to encourage settlement, and induce our people to remain at home. The management of the public domain is one of the matters which should be considered and reformed, to this end. Eastern Canada is interested in the settlement of the west. Business people there look in this direction to find a market for their manufactures, and to extend their business. The people of the east should therefore bestir themselves, as well as those of the west, in demanding a cessation of land grants at once.

It seems strange that this land question has been allowed to slide along as it has. During the past few years, *The Commercial* has several times raised a warning voice, but the people of the west evidently fail to comprehend even to a slight extent the enormity of the interest at stake, and the terrible evil which has been fastened upon the country. It is to be hoped that the figures given above will come as a revelation to the people, and that such a demand will be made as will effectually stop this evil policy.

Not only should the custom of granting lands cease at once, but an effort should be made to repair some of the injury already done. In cases where corporations have not earned the lands granted them, they should be held strictly to the conditions upon which the grant has been given, and any failure to fulfill these