

now determine whether or not it shall be cultivated or allowed to lie useless. And if economic rent accrues, all the better for the Community.

But that day is not yet. In the meantime, the lot of the landless agricultural labour excites the active sympathy of reformers and demands the attention of the Legislature. He is also a disturber of the labour market in industrial centres. He is virtually driven off the land, by low wages and a cheerless prospect, into the towns and cities, or he voluntarily goes there in search of a more varied existence; and in the struggle to obtain his desires he brings down the wages of other workers, adds to the congestion of city life, and creates the social problem.

A great Imperial purpose would likewise be promoted by colonising the North-West by such a class as that indicated. Canada, of itself, cannot develop this extensive region of rich soil. She has neither the means nor the population to do so. She has done her best, but that, much as it is when her limited resources are considered, counts for very little compared with what the vastness of the territory hungering for population requires, if it is to remain a part of the Dominion, and its boundless possibilities are to be opened up to labour and enterprise.

Annexation may or may not be the best solution of the Canadian question. I found comparatively few in the North-West who favoured incorporation with the United States. Next to a desire to remain within the Empire was a feeling for independence; which sentiment, however, was held as a preference to annexation, and as contingent upon the Dominion and Imperial Governments failing to do for the North-West what the United States would undoubtedly perform, if the Stars and Stripes were permitted to supplant the Union Jack north of the international boundary line. Much as there is to admire in the government of the United States, I confess I would not wish to see it extend its sway across the St. Lawrence to the North Pole. It possesses quite enough of territory already. The further it is extended, the weaker will become the central influence which is ruling so wisely and so well so vast a continent, embracing communities including people of every European race, by the simple but efficient method of allowing the citizens of the Republic to manage their own affairs in their own way. No friend of free institutions would wish to see the federal system of the United States weakened. Its great object-lesson of government by the people will ultimately help to democratise all European Governments; and upon international grounds alone the acquisition of Canada by the United States would be a misfortune. Independent, Canada may become. She has the chance if she wills it, along with territory enough to form a heritage fit for an empire. But such independence, if established in defiance of the Imperial Government, would always be menaced by the