

The Commercial

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ASSISTED IMMIGRATION.

Mr. Hespeler's history of the Mennonite settlers in Manitoba, at the recent immigration convention, furnished a striking illustration of what can be accomplished in this country by perseverance and industry. It also teaches that we should not despise immigrants with limited means, if they are the right class. It further teaches that it pays even to assist immigrants, providing they are the right kind. The Mennonites were poor. They had not sufficient means to enable them to settle in Manitoba, and the Dominion government advanced nearly \$200,000 to aid them in making a home in this new land. This sum they have entirely repaid with interest, and they are now thoroughly prosperous. In fact, becoming wealthy. Last season they harvested 8,500,000 bushels of grain and they possess large numbers of live stock. If the Dominion government could secure the right class of settlers, it would pay the country, as this experiment has proved, to expend not only \$200,000 but millions in assisting settlers. The land alone is of no value. It is settlement that gives it value. If good settlers could be obtained by giving them some assistance on the start, it would pay to settle up the entire public domain in this way. The Mennonites did not cost the country anything, because they repaid their loan in full with interest. But besides this, they have been a great source of wealth to the country. They have assisted in swelling the revenue of the country by the large amount they have paid in taxes, direct and indirect, the latter through the consumption of dutiable goods. If the government had expended \$200,000 per year in assisting the good immigrants to settle here, the country would be much wealthier than it is to-day. There is, no doubt, plenty of material in Great Britain, Scandinavia and other parts of northern Europe just as good as the Mennonites, which could be introduced to our prairie country with equally good results.

THE QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

It is to be regretted that the immigration convention failed to pass a resolution in favor of a relaxing of the quarantine regulations, in the interest of immigration. Opposition from the live stock interests particularly led to this result. It is natural, perhaps, that the live stock interest should oppose any relaxing of the quarantine regulations, but they evidently attach too great importance to the question. The quarantine regulations could be maintained, so far as lingering in stock for commercial purposes is concerned, so that the live stock interests would have nothing to fear from the importation of live stock to the detriment of their business. The only thing to be desired is that the regulations should be relaxed in the interest of bona fide settlers who are coming into the country with only such live stock as they require for their own use. In

relaxing the quarantine regulations the number and class of animals allowed to be brought in by immigrants could be specified. The scab disease was not introduced into the territories by immigrants.

Now that the immigration convention has failed to deal with the matter, the Winnipeg board of trade should lose no time in again taking up this question with the Dominion government. The Commercial regards the quarantine regulations as the greatest bar in existence to the immigration of a large number of good settlers. We are practically shut out of our best field by the quarantine regulations, and we will never be able to command a large stream of immigration from the United States until some provision is made to admit the live stock of incoming settlers on reasonable conditions.

THE IMMIGRATION CONVENTION.

When the immigration convention was first proposed, The Commercial was somewhat skeptical as to the practical results which might be hoped for from such a movement. However, the convention has come and gone, and it has been a brilliant success, so far as attendance, enthusiasm and earnest effort could make it. The response to the call for a convention has been more generally replied to than could have been expected by the promoters. The vast territory from Lake Superior to the Pacific coast was all well represented, and there was general harmony in the proceedings. All seemed to recognize that the great need of the country is people, and all seemed prepared to work together to promote the settlement of the country.

So far as practical results are concerned, that will be for the future to develop. A permanent association, with an executive, has been formed, and through this organization means may be found for prosecuting immigration work to better advantage than has been the case in the past. Of course with an association of this kind, the real difficulty will be in financing. The association at present has no financial basis to work on, and it requires funds to carry on immigration work. However, some plan may be worked out for successfully financing the organization.

But even without a financial basis to enable it to engage in active immigration work, the association could no doubt do much good as an advisory body. It could assist in stimulating the government or other organizations in prosecuting immigration work, as well as in stimulating individual effort. The convention in itself should prove a great stimulus to immigration effort, both to the governments, federal and provincial and to individual effort. The proceedings of the convention would form excellent immigration literature. The addresses told of the resources of the country, the development of recent years, the mistakes of the past, the experiences of old settlers, etc., etc., all going to supply practical information of a most valuable nature. Many excellent papers were presented at this convention, which furnish most desirable information about the country. Perhaps the programme of set addresses was rather overdone, taking up more time than was desirable, but allowance may be made

for this when we consider the vast amount of valuable information which can be gleaned from these papers. Many of the delegates would no doubt have preferred to have had more time devoted to general discussion, but in an unorganized convention of this nature the danger would have been to wander from the points at issue and absorb the time in useless discussion. Of course it was impossible to give all the delegates an opportunity to make addresses, when such a large number were present, within the time allowed to the convention.

While we may have to wait some time for practical results from the association, so far as aggressive immigration work is concerned, there is one direction in which good work can be done at once. We refer to the necessity for making every effort to assist and encourage new settlers on their arrival here. Our efforts should not cease when an immigrant has been induced to come here. In fact they should only be begun. It is quite as important to look after immigrants after they arrive here, as it is to induce them to come. Thousands of good people have been lost to the country in the past by neglect, or lack of encouragement being extended to them on their arrival here. Every effort should be made, both individually, collectively and officially, to take hold of immigrants on their arrival here, and give them every encouragement and assistance possible. It is really a very difficult thing for a newly arrived immigrant to know how to proceed to the best advantage in selecting land. Some years ago The Commercial several times urged the importance of some organized effort being made in every district to assist incoming settlers. If the newly formed association can keep the people stirred up at home to the importance of looking carefully after immigrants on their arrival here, the convention will not have been in vain.

THE REMEDIAL BILL.

In parliament at Ottawa on Tuesday the second reading of the bill relating to the Manitoba school question was moved by Sir Charles Tupper, who reviewed the educational question from the time of confederation forward, showing that this was an important point with the fathers of confederation, and that the confederation movement would never have been successful if the constitution had not been framed to protect minorities. Mr. Laurier followed in a brilliant speech, in which he took the ground that every resource should be exhausted before federal interference was attempted. This he claimed had not been the policy of the government. He moved the six months hoist.

This Manitoba school question is the most wretched piece of business that has been introduced into party politics since the days of confederation. That it is being considered purely as a party question, upon which there is almost a straight division between the two parties, is evident from the course of events at Ottawa. It is indeed a matter for regret to every loyal Canadian that this matter has come into party politics. The Dominion government has evidently stood too much