

dirty bunks, where the only window is often a pane or two of glass above the one doorway, and where a decent bath is an impossibility. Construction camps and bunk-houses are planned after the same fashion to provide the minimum of space, ventilation and cleanliness for the maximum of men.

Here and there, particularly where laborers from the south and west of Europe are found, their homes are such as the Ontario Board of Health found at Sault St. Marie: "The colony is crowded into a lot of miserable shacks, filthy both outside and inside; no cellars, no drainage, closets on the surface of the ground, vile beyond description; water from shallow wells, which were dirty and unfit for use, and most of them located within a few feet of the closets. . . ."

In the cities the problem takes two forms, that of the decayed, tumble down separate house, and that of the more pretentious and more dangerous tenement. In the first we have the problem that is, in the latter the greater problem that is to be.

A description given in Dr. Helen Macmurchy's pamphlet on Infant Mortality of conditions in certain sections of Toronto is true of any one of our larger Canadian cities, east or west. "There you shall see ten mean houses in a row, with one water-tap out on the street, which is their one source of water supply. How can the mother keep things clean? There you shall see whole districts where that abomination, miscalled a sanitary convenience, recalls to one the unmentionable filth of the seventeenth century. There you shall see back to back houses—houses unfit for human habitation—houses unfit for a dog-kennel—houses that Hercules himself, who cleansed the Augean stables, would refuse the contract to clean. And we expect the poor women bearing the burden of motherhood to do it! That house was probably old and filthy when she came to it. The lack of any convenience, sanitary or otherwise, no bath—no sink even sometimes, an unpaved street or lane outside, and a good deal of dirt constantly coming into the house in various ways—the sum total is too much. . . ."

It is criminal for any community to tolerate such things in its midst. Death is busy in such regions, especially among infants. And the moral degeneration of growing girls and boys is constant and enormous. The present generation suffers and the succeeding generation will suffer more intensely. All that is sober, pitiful and right-loving in a city should rise up and declare that no innocent person in that city should be condemned to the punishment of dwelling amid such hazards and hardships.

But the sharpest housing problem is that of the tenement block or apartment block. Many imposing buildings called by aristocratic names, and housing wealthy and fashionable people, may disdain the title 'tenement.' But they are tenements nevertheless. A tenement is a building where two or more families carry on independent housekeeping. There are good tenements, and bad, and very bad. But all are tenements and should be under the same laws and subject to the same inspection.

Our larger cities already have a moderate number of tenements. The number is sure to increase rapidly. They are the natural result of city growth, where it is found necessary for many people to live upon a limited earth space. Add to this the conveniences they afford, so that many a family can manage without a maid which otherwise must possess one. Add to this, again, that in Canada at least, they possess a certain social vogue and rank which gives them a peculiar desirability and it is evident that they are to play an important part in the housing of Canadian city dwellers.

Now, it is true that many of the better class apartment blocks are above the Plimsoll line of wise regulation. Yet, at their very best, they are not the sort of dwelling one would wish for citizens. None of them are comparable to the individual house and lot as a wholesome

human habitation. They narrow the range and increase the instability of domestic life. As Mr. Lawrence Veiller, secretary of the New York Tenement House Commission, says, "Democracy was not predicated upon a country made up of tenement dwellers, nor can it so survive."

It should be remembered, too, that as the city grows the complexion of its population, in its several districts, is constantly changing. The rich man's house becomes the poor man's house, as the rich man goes further out from the dust and noise and overcrowding in the central portions of the city. Three families come to take the house that had contained one. It becomes a tenement. Then, later, these three multiply into six, and take lodgers as well. There is less light, space, ventilation, sanitation for each person. And tenements are permanent structures. The shack soon decays, or becomes too cheap an investment for the valuable ground it occupies. Therefore a wise foresight will pay special attention to the character of the tenements that are being built.

It astonishes one who comes from New York, where the tenement evil has been made manifest, to find that those features which are now sternly forbidden in the swollen American metropolis are being reproduced in our comparatively small cities. If our ambition is to be like New York, we are certainly compassing it, in some of its most sinister manifestations.

So far as I am aware only Manitoba and Nova Scotia have Tenement House acts. Every Province should have them, applicable to all towns of ten thousand or more population. These acts should follow, mainly, the New York law, which is a model for this continent. It provides that no tenement shall occupy more than 70% of the lot on which it is built, save corner lots, when it may cover 90%. It shall not be more than 1½ times as high as the widest street it abuts upon. It shall contain no dark rooms, the size and outlook of each window being specifically enjoined. Its airshafts and light-wells shall be spacious, and allow of free motion of the air. It shall have separate toilets for each apartment, in the interests of both health and morality. It shall have fire-escapes, with ladders that slope, and on the front of the building. And there are other provisions regarding the lighting of the passages, janitorship, what business establishments may be in ground floor story, and as to the manner of construction.

It is impossible, in one short article, to do more than sound a warning. To tell the story of the 'lung blocks,' where the death rate from tuberculosis reached 40 per thousand, of the results in hot weather of blind floors at the bottom of airshafts, of the effects of the strange isolation which these crowded buildings engender and of the results on adolescents driven to the streets for social life, would fill a volume.

It is invidious to make comparisons between the various efforts which people of goodwill are making for the improvement of the dwellings of the poor. Model tenements are good things, as are suburban garden cities. All success to the promoters of them. But, after all, this is a matter for legislation, and, what is still more vital, inspection. Social justice demands a decent house for every family, and nothing but the absolute prevention by force of law of all houses that are less than decent will suffice. The will of society that none of its members shall live in unwholesome and morally perilous quarters can be made effective only by organization which is the authoritative voice and strong right arm of society. It is supremely the duty of the state.

TO GET PEOPLE TO LIVE ON THE LAND.

How to get people to want to live on the land is the crux of the rural-population problem, and it suggests some fresh lines of attitude and action by parents, school teachers, the press, the pulpit, and legislators who have to do with taxation, transport, and public generally.