

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. *

VOL. XL.

REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1875.

NO. 662.

WINNIPEG, MAN. MAY 31, 1905. LONDON, ONT.

Editorial.

Federal Control of Crown Lands.

So far the discussion on the bills to erect the new Provinces has centered on the question of Provincial rights and its sub-question, the educational clause, regarding which the opinion of this paper has been announced, and to this opinion we have nothing to add. With regard to the determination of the Federal Government, as expressed in the bill, to retain for some time the administration of lands, there is little to be urged against it, if the building up and settling of the country is kept steadily in view.

Our objection to making two Provinces was based on the disadvantages of a multiplication of Governmental machinery, with the resultant expense, and the same principle is the basis for our opinion that for the present it is better that the Federal Government retain the lands. It has been argued that, if the Provinces got the lands, free homesteads would be done away with, which may or may not be true, but if true would be unfortunate, as these are a great lodestone to intending settlers, especially from south of the boundary.

An article appeared in Collier's Weekly recently, headed "Building Canada with Americans," from which the following excerpts are made, as showing what an attraction free homesteads are:

"Intelligence of good farm land does not fly like the tidings of a gold strike, however, and these principles, if let alone, would have been a long time in peopling the great Canadian Northwest. In the past two or three years the interested parties—the Canadian Government, the speculators, and the railways—have been planning a great campaign of concerted action, which, despite the fact that so little has been heard of it, is now in full blast. Where a few years ago we lost good citizens by the hundred by migration over our borders, we are about to lose them by the hundred thousand, and I do not hesitate to say, from examinations I have made of numbers of parties, either en route or about to depart, that they are the very best stock from our settled rural communities. It is a leak at the 'top' and not at the bottom.

"Of course, it is unfortunate that the tens of thousands of desirable citizens who have left the country to better their condition could not have found this betterment by going west in the United States to equally good lands, which, thanks to the exquisite operations of our political system, are not now open to homesteading, as they have been grabbed in recent years by corporations and speculators. Having been robbed under the nose of a complacent Government of what was rightfully theirs, they cannot be blamed if the pastures look better under the British flag.

"The truth is that the westward tide has bumped into the unyielding front of ranch, timber land, and mining-tract grabs, and so turns north into Canada—ere long in numbers of a hundred thousand per year—birthright-plundered expatriates!

"The gods of Progress and Change now have breached our walls to the northward, and the first rush of what is destined to be a mighty hegira is pouring from the United States into Western Canada. It is wholly an artificially directed movement—the work of the Canadian Government, the Canadian railways, and the Canadian land speculators. Sound, economic principles, however, underlie the superficial causes that have set the tens of thousands on the move."

An effective immigration policy is best conducted by a central authority. Although On-

tario for years has had possession of her lands, neither in the Old Country nor in the United States did she conduct an immigration propaganda worthy of the name. The Manitoba Government's Immigration Department has done its most useful work, not as an immigration department, but as a harvest-hands distributing bureau. British Columbia has done comparatively nothing, it being there practically left to individuals and municipalities to advertise the possibilities and attract people; and it would therefore be a public calamity if at this time the Federal Government were to abandon its immigration policy. Separate Provinces cannot afford the expense of an active immigration policy; united, the cost comes easier.

Another reason in favor of retention of the lands, is the splendid work done by the N.-W. M. P. in preserving law and order, and stamping out diseases of animals. Once that force were disbanded, cattle rustling and horse stealing would be far more common than now. Then, again, the Dominion Experimental farms system, already of great benefit, and fraught with great possibilities, will, we hope, be preserved and extended to meet the needs of this rapidly-developing country. So that, take it all in all, looking at the matter from a business point of view, and from the standpoint of national progress, we would reiterate our former abjuration, that, for the present, let the Federal Government retain the lands; and in saying this, no doubt or imputation is placed on the ability of the Provinces to handle the lands ably and honestly. The vacant lands being really an asset of the Dominion of Canada as a whole, can be advertised more cheaply and thoroughly by the one central authority than by three or four separate institutions. It is to be regretted extremely that the law-makers have not seen fit to incorporate in the bills for the two Provinces provision for making an endowment with sufficient land to adequately support an agricultural college for each Province. Such would have been statesmanlike; but one cannot expect statesmanlike deeds from men animated by politicians' ideas. In this matter of providing for the future of agriculture the Federal Government could well have afforded to imitate the people at Washington.

The Carnegie System of Distributing Wealth.

It is open to any millionaire to distribute his wealth as he pleases, and criticisms of his methods are unwarranted, providing he does not claim to do great good by his benefactions. The Carnegie system is based on the principle that education of a certain form is a panacea for the bulk of human ills, which is rather a large claim. Inspected more closely, the principle held savors of the very materialism it is supposed to avoid or combat, placing as it does a premium on mere knowledge.

Libraries are a most ornamental and useful adjunct to any community, but the great forces of ignorance and disease—the latter largely the child of the former—cannot be overcome by aggregations of books, or the frequenting of book storehouses. The great need of human kind to-day, in order to improve the race, is more healthful food and less disease. Given those two things, the brain can do its normal work; otherwise it cannot. Occasionally a genius in literature or art has sprung from an environment of poverty and disease, but such are few, and bear no relation to the rank and file of the people.

The Carnegie benefactions are vastly inferior in their conception and performance to those of Sir William Macdonald; the latter encourages

people to work as well as to read and think; the former supplies the opportunity to some people to waste time, to others to improve themselves.

What is the ideal form for a millionaire's gifts to take? The support of hospitals for the poor! The endowment of a hospital in centers of population is probably the best all-round method of distributing benefactions, without making such mere alms or charity.

Large free hospitals mean a benefit to the whole of mankind, more than is obtained by direct relief of suffering. At hospitals are great chances for the embryo medico gaining that rich clinical experience so essential to successful practice. Not only so, but cases which are more or less hopeless, can be kept under continuous, thorough and skilled observation, and the observations thus made may be of use in suggesting new and more successful methods of treatment. The hospital is an essential for the study of such diseases as cancer and other malignant maladies, and its scrupulously clean operating rooms can hardly be dispensed with if success in surgery is to be obtained. The person in need of food or health cannot think clearly or reason well, and the present form of donating libraries to cities and towns well able to afford to pay for them, is not, it seems to us, making the wisest and best use of one's riches.

Distribution of Shrubs by the Experimental Farms.

Discussing in these columns from time to time the work of the experimental farms, we have had occasion to criticise the system of free-seed distribution, on two scores—first, that the quantities were far too small to be of any great benefit; and, secondly, that we believed in people paying for what they got. It surely is a very serious falling away from the standard of ethics, that a Government institution should be found encouraging people to believe in the doctrine or principle underlying "gambling," namely, the getting of something for nothing.

Aside from this, the distribution of free shrubs is open to the objection of interfering with legitimate business, as there are now nurseries in Canada able to supply all the large and small-fruit trees and ornamental shrubs called for. In objecting to this free distribution by the experimental farms, this paper does NOT include the Forestry Branch of the Department of the Interior, which, by the way, is devoting its attention to the growth of shelter belts. Such work is one of the reasons for which the branch was created, and although some may object even to the free distribution of trees by that branch of the public service, we consider the arguments are not sufficiently strong to lead the "Farmer's Advocate" to support that view at the present time. It has been stated in defence of free tree distribution, that the prices asked by the nurserymen were out of all proportion to the value of the trees. That may or may not be the case; but, in any event, it has no bearing on the particular case before us. Shelter belts are essential to the successful growing of large and small fruits and ornamentals, and to home-building on the prairies. The ornamentals come into the "luxury" class, and the "Farmer's Advocate" believes that those wishing to possess luxuries should pay for them. At the time of the institution of this system of donations of ornamental shrubs and fruit trees, the Director may have been desirous of obtaining the experiences of farmers in other parts of Manitoba and the Territories with such plants, but such a reason is not a valid one now.

Why should shrubs or fruit trees or seeds be distributed free by the farms,