

partnership of the world must be the production of food. At her door is the British market, and of that market she by no means has yet made full use. Added to this general consideration is the fact that in our cities unemployment has begun to rear its ugly head. Wide stretches of rich land are waiting for the plough, great cities overseas need to be fed, and men in Canada can find no work to do. It is a state of affairs that calls for adjustment and remedy. It is not a state of affairs to be cured by moralizing or by preaching. It is not wholly a matter of tariffs or of economic policy in the narrower sense of the term. For a great many years on this continent the march of development has been to increase the amenities of life in the city and to do little for those of the country; it is time for a serious attempt to understand and to handle the problem of rural life: for rural development above all rests on making rural life more profitable and more agreeable.

The grand problem of the rural development of Canada falls into a number of subordinate and co-related problems.

The Railway.

The railway is life. On this continent no farming district can hold its own if it has not railway communication with the markets and centres of population, and our distribution of railway lines has proceeded with little or no control on the part of the people. We have an enormous mileage in proportion to our population; but the earlier distribution of our railway lines was governed by the earlier and mistaken view of the economics of land transportation. People thought that railway rates were to be governed by competition alone, and towns and districts fought with each other to secure rival railways, only to discover that the competitors did not compete. To the era of competition has succeeded that of regulation; but the fruit of the old method is to be seen in the eccentric and unscientific distribution of our branch railways—the lines that serve the farmers. All over the country, but more especially on the prairies, we see districts which are over-served interspersed with districts which are under-served.

Methods forecast results, while results indicate methods. A map hangs in the Railway Committee Room of the House of Commons on which is marked every railway project which has been chartered by the Parliament of Canada. It is a remarkable document, eloquent of the utter lack of system with which this all-important subject has been handled. If all the lines which have been authorized were to be built, some would have to be constructed underground, for only so could they find space. Still the methods have produced the results, and it is no secret that the transportation situation in Canada is approaching a very critical stage indeed. It is to be hoped that we shall not stumble blindly into that critical stage, trusting to mere luck to stagger out again to firm ground. We know the results we must obtain in transportation if we are to be a factor in this North American Continent. We are living beside a great people who do not stop at half measures, and it is with them that we must to a large extent compete in the markets of the world. And the results at