

they even were possessed of the means of encountering the hardships and privations that must be endured by all those who are in search of independence in the forests. The question of how they are to be provided for during the five long and unproductive months of winter is one that never once entered into the calculation of persons who have unhappily been too well acquainted with the trade of paupers to shrink from its exercise in a new land.

The natural consequence arising from this state of affairs is that the inhabitants of Quebec are saddled during the winter months with a fearful addition to the ordinary number of local poor, that have to be provided for at a season of the year when it becomes peculiarly burthensome.

It is at all times much easier to point out evils than to propose remedies that upon trial will be found to operate as a cure. I cannot pretend to suggest such means as would entirely obviate the difficulties existing from the circumstances stated, but I think that these may be very much lessened, and the way opened to future ameliorations in the system by a very simple measure, resting entirely at the discretion of the officer at the head of the department connected with the employment of labourers and artificers upon the work now carrying on upon the Cape.

The means I should respectfully propose would be that of reserving a portion of the daily wages of the persons employed on these works as a fund for their future subsistence.

The industrious and saving would most readily agree to the proposition, while the idle and dissipated, on the other hand, will most probably dislike it, and be thereby deterred from remaining in Quebec; the public works would be benefited by having at their command an incomparably better set of labourers, while the public would be relieved from the burden of maintaining a set of worthless paupers for nearly one half of the year.

But it is not sufficient barely to save the money for future aid to these persons; means should be also adopted to employ it so as to become of permanent benefit to themselves and families, and what is perhaps of nearly equal importance, of substantial advantage to the improvement and prosperity of the province.

A few, and only a very few of the labourers hitherto employed on the Cape have had the foresight to place a portion of their summer earnings in the Savings Bank, but as this has invariably been withdrawn in winter, the labourer still remains in the same state of dependence upon labour in towns; he can permanently save nothing; old age, sickness, or death finds him equally unprepared to encounter extraordinary expenses, and leaves his family to be supported by public charity.

A common labourer can only have one road to permanent future subsistence, that of laying out his small savings upon a farm. The labourers in Quebec have the great advantage offered of being enabled to obtain lands at less than a day's journey distance from their work. Under existing circumstances it might not be advisable to delay the execution of the plan proposed until grants of government lands could be obtained, and the forms gone through to open them for immediate improvement. Great quantities of uncultivated lands are in the possession of individuals anxious to settle them; in the near neighbourhood of this city, on the north side, I may instance the townships of Stoneham and Tewkesbury, the seigniories of St. Gabriel, Faussembault and Beauport. On the south side are the townships of Frampton, Stanstead and Buckland, and the townships on Craig's Road, also the seigniori of St. Giles; any quantity of lands may be had in these places at small rents. What I would propose, that no labourer should be admitted into the government employ but such as were anxious to become agriculturists, and willing to save a portion of their wages to prepare their farms for future support.