

It is apparent that in several of the elements indicated as essential to agricultural success, there would seem to exist an implied or necessary opposition between the interests of the producer and the middleman, be he peddler, railway company, or merchant; but to the extent that each of these is necessary to the economic and proper division of trade and handling of products this is not so. Of course, beyond this need there is necessarily a conflict. To make but one illustration one asks: "Is it necessary that a province be sub-divided into districts by the buyers for the great meat packing houses, who receive day by day from headquarters in some large city, instructions as to what the price of cattle, hogs, and other farm produce is to be, and is it necessary that they shall freeze out through the capital of these companies any individual drover or butcher who may dare enter any pre-empted field? Is it necessary to general prosperity that such companies get control by lease of city cattle markets and of the stock of competing abattoir companies and command not only the purchases in the field, but also the purchases in the stock yards, obtaining at the same time special privileges regarding cars at all the railway cattle yards of a district? And is it in the interests of general trade or of the producers or consumers who together number millions that three or more prices be added to most articles between the producer and the consumer? Surely it is time that capital and labor were combined in the interests of the agriculturist and the protection of the consumer. It may well be that a whole horde of commission men and small dealers, as middlemen might in the changed methods of co-operation in producing and trading as in England and elsewhere, prove unnecessary and a drag in the business field; but there is a certainty that the producer and consumer would each come into his own and more if the present non-producers would be forced to engage once more in that agriculture which has been abandoned, while capital and business experience would

be taken with them to their own and to the community's advantage as a whole.

In a word, we here are forced as citizens, as students of every social problem affecting the happiness and prosperity of the people as a whole, and as apostles of preventive medicine carried into every phase of life, to seriously ask ourselves and others: How long can a country, essentially a producer of raw material by virtue of geographical location and extent of territory still largely undeveloped, continue to develop normally and prosper, when it has shown a displacement of rural population during the last ten years to an extent so far as I can learn never witnessed before in the history of any people, and an increase of urban population rapid even beyond the palmiest days of United States immigration? Can we as intelligent Canadians view without alarm a situation where a population largely without capital, mostly of casual laborers, often of foreign tongue, and in ten years greater than the population of eight of our largest cities, has crowded into our urban centres living necessarily from day to day upon the ever-changing demands for day labor, forgetting that 1890 and 1907 may come again?

Are we, if we realize these facts and their meaning, to remain inactive, taking no organized steps to lessen this abnormal and insane urban influx by turning this mass of human energy back to the land, and if not to prevent at least to minimize inevitable disaster, where speculation and not production has seized hold of so many who cannot think along economic lines and who illustrate only the *carpe diem* of superficial Epicurean philosophy?

From nowhere better than the Canadian Public Health Association can such a warning be sounded, such methods be advanced, and such action be taken, since in a peculiar sense we have assumed a health and social guardianship of the people; while if we speak wisely we may properly expect that our teachings and advice will be heard.