

Ups and Downs

PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES.

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TORONTO, APRIL 1ST, 1897.



WE have heard it said that there are only two seasons in Canada—the warm season and the cold season. Whatever exception geographers, schoolmasters and others who insist on scientific accuracy, may take to this rather broad statement, certain it is the advent of April appears to bring about a sudden and complete change in the condition of things; and not only climatically, but in other respects, which continues without variation, except in degree, for 7 or 8 months. For our friends, as for every member of the farm household, the coming of April means "go"; and they keep going until November or December with but little intermission; then comes the period of comparative ease and of bright cold days, from which they emerge, toned to the right pitch for the season's work.

This is the condition in which we hope all our young agriculturists find themselves now. The outlook throughout the country is by no means discouraging. The fear prevalent not long ago that probable changes in the fiscal policy of the country would have a very disturbing effect upon all industries, and most of all upon farming, has disappeared; for it is very generally recognized now that the Dominion Government, although nominally a free-trade government, will not disarrange the existing order of things, except by a very gradual process. Canada is receiving a good deal of advertising in the old country, and advertising of the proper kind is all Canada wants to ensure a more generous share of old world capital and population. We well remember what hazy ideas of Canada prevailed among many very intelligent and otherwise well-informed people in England, only a few years ago. Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver, of course, were recognized as four rather important towns—or was it "trading posts"?—travel between which was full of all kinds of dangers, the only other places of habitation being an occasional farm, the dwellers upon which were supposed to be cut off entirely from their fellow-beings, except on the rare occasions that they paid a visit to the nearest of the "trading posts" already mentioned.

How little of exaggeration there is in stating that this was not an uncommon conception of Canada in England a few years ago, will be evident when it is remembered that only last fall the leading daily paper of an English provincial town, in referring to the visit to Canada of the Chinese Viceroy, said:

"His Excellency will then proceed on his homeward voyage, leaving Montreal on board the *Empress of India*, which will carry him to Vancouver."

Canada is certainly a "go-ahead" country, but up to that time we had not heard of the navigation of large steamers from Montreal to Vancouver.

The development of British Columbian gold mines; the different important political questions which have arisen of late years; the ever-increasing supply of Canadian produce in the English market: all these things are having a wonderful effect in educating the minds of the mass of English people to a proper appreciation of Canada's resources and its claims to consideration as a field for investment. The participation of Canadian statesmen, with our capable Premier at their head, in the Jubilee ceremonies in England next June, will not, we may be sure, fail to further stimulate interest in this part of the Empire.

May we not also justly claim that Canada owes a debt of gratitude to Dr. Barnardo for the manner in which he has demonstrated to the people of England that Canada is a country capable of absorbing to its, and to their, advantage, thousands and tens of thousands of those who are willing to take their places among the ranks of industrious tillers of the soil?

The letters that have reached the Home since Mr. Owen left for England show that our friends, as a rule, are hearing less of the cry of hard times than in the last two or three years. Most of the engagements that we have heard of seem to be of a very satisfactory character. Certainly wages are not lower than they were a year ago.

The number of applications received from farmers during the last few weeks is, we understand, heavier than it has been in the corresponding period for some years. This in itself is a sure sign of less need of the strict economy which so many farmers have been compelled to practise during the last few seasons. Every boy over 14 in the party that Mr. Owen is now bringing out, was bespoke several weeks ago. There will be a few bright, sturdy lads of 12 and 13 available, but for the older boys the demand far exceeds the supply.

We might point out that a boy of 13 who has been trained to use his eyes and hands, to be respectful and obey orders, to be honest and truthful, is splendid material out of which to manufacture first-class reliable "help." Of course he could not do, and it would be absolutely wrong to ask him to do, the work of a lad a year or two older, but that he would more than justify his presence and quickly become of really valuable assistance, under the guidance of a judicious employer, we do not for a moment doubt.

Quite a large number—50—of lads not over 13 have gone out to places since Mr. Owen's departure. Some of these were in residence at the Home, but a large proportion had been boarding out for some time in Muskoka. All have gone to what we have every reason to believe to be good homes, and under agreements which will ensure them a fair rate of remuneration, and attendance at school in cases where it has been deemed necessary to make such provision.

This going out to a "first place" is a far more momentous event in a lad's life than may appear at first sight. If he goes with a manly determination to do his duty; not to be easily cast down; and under all circumstances to

maintain his self respect, which means that he will also have the respect of others: there will be little to fear of failure but every reason to expect a future of happiness and prosperity.

If, however, a lad goes out with heart only half in his new duties; disposed to grumble at every little difficulty, or what to him seems a difficulty; always looking for the "soft side" of every job entrusted to him: he will soon fill those around him with a feeling of contempt and distrust; changes in situation will characterize his career, until when he is 21 he finds he has made for himself anything but a bed of roses—rather one of thorns; and on it he has to lie as best he can. We hope and believe this will be the lot of few, if of any, of the lads who have gone forth in the last few weeks to commence their careers as wage-earners.

Our friends may be surprised to learn that they came in for a good deal of attention "on the floor of the House" two weeks ago. The Bill bearing upon Juvenile Immigration, to which Mr. Owen referred in "Echoes" last month, has been presented to the Local Legislature for first reading; it has been altered in many respects in Committee of the Whole, the amendments in every case being of a very desirable character; and it awaits but the formality of a third reading to become the law of the land. In addition to the very practical assistance the Act will render to those engaged in legitimate—we use the word in its moral sense—institutional work of which immigration is a main feature, the introduction of the Bill served to drive away not a little misapprehension that existed in the minds of one or two legislators regarding the methods in vogue in Dr. Barnardo's Institutions, and regarding the calibre of his boys in Canada; a tribute being paid to both by the Hon. Mr. Gibson, Minister of Crown Lands, who presented the Bill.

There were also other prominent Members, notably Dr. Ryerson, of Toronto, who evinced a warm interest in the Homes, and whose utterances proclaimed how incapable they were of being influenced in their judgment by the persistent efforts and noisy clamouring of irrepressible agitators.

An incident came under our personal notice a few weeks ago which illustrates very forcibly how common is the practice of placing upon Dr. Barnardo's shoulders, responsibility for the arrival in Canada of every young immigrant who proves a failure in any way. We were one of a large number of visitors to the Provincial Institute for the Blind at Brantford—by the bye one of the most capably conducted institutions of the kind we ever visited.

Among the many interesting features of the visit was an impromptu exhibition of gymnastics by a number of blind youths, one of whom was particularly proficient. Our attention and that of others was drawn to him by the hospitable and courteous Director of the Institute, who said, "He's a Barnardo boy."

Naturally we became more interested than ever; although we thought there was some mistake. "Are you sure he is a Barnardo boy? Do you know when he came out?" we asked. "Oh, I don't mean that he came out from Dr. Barnardo's Home—but he is a kind of Barnardo boy—a young immigrant."

We could not resist the temptation of pointing out that if "Barnardo boy" were to be accepted as a synonym for "young immigrant" on all occasions, the genuine Barnardo boys would suffer for the sins of others.

Our point was appreciated at once, and the gentleman in question hastened to express his regret for thoughtlessly misusing the term. He