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RECENTLY it was pointed out in these pages that Canada has almost as acute social problems as Great Britain, population considered.

A nation of seven million people scattered over a generous extent of territory should not have anything like the extreme conditions which prevail among forty-five million people crowded into an extremely small territory. Yet, owing to the large population of foreigners and other new settlers, some of our cities have social problems equal in degree though not in size to the problems of the cities of Great Britain. Montreal and Winnipeg especially have social problems which are quite large enough to tax the resources of the civic authorities.

Just the other day, a Methodist minister attending a church conference at Ottawa felt it necessary to point out the unsatisfactory social and sanitary conditions in the "north end" of Winnipeg. His remarks aroused much resentment when published in the Winnipeg newspapers and some of his opinions have been warmly attacked. Nevertheless, we may be quite sure that he had some solid reasons for his remarks. He may have painted the picture in colours which are too strong, but there is some justification for the picture. A city which has grown as fast as Winnipeg and which contains so large a percentage of ignorant and impecunious foreigners, must necessarily have much educative mission work to perform. These people do not always appreciate fresh air and are not always given to cleanliness and high moral living. They will crowd themselves together in small houses and are certain to breed fever and pestilence unless closely watched. They have much lower standards of morality than those which obtain among native Canadians and their virtues are neither so numerous nor so well defined. To raise their standards of private conduct, decent living and civic virtue to a reasonable level is a task which will long tax the resources of the civic and provincial authorities of the Western provinces.



EVERY nation is doomed to a continual struggle with its own peculiar economic, social and religious problems. Evil men and women, selfish rulers of various grades, unwise and reckless legislators, selfish and grasping land-owners and millionaires exist in every country. The idle poor, the decadent pauper, the destructive socialist or anarchist are also to be found in every civilised community. Add to these the religious fanatics and theological fakirs and there is seen to be a conglomerate reactionary element. Japan, China, Russia, Italy, Spain, Great Britain or the United States—the problems are pretty much the same. The newer the civilisation, the smaller should be these problems. This is the reason why Canada suffers less than the United States and why the United States suffers less than European countries. Nevertheless, Canadians have no justification for folding their hands and trying to make themselves believe that the social and economic problems of the day are confined to the Old World.



FOR example, the land-hunger which is disturbing Great Britain and Ireland to-day is a problem-in-sight for Canada. In another ten years, all the "homestead" land owned by the various governments will have been taken up. In ten years every acre of accessible agricultural land will have passed into the hands of farmers, land-companies, railway companies and speculators. Then all land will begin to rise in value at a terrific rate and the land-hunger will come into existence. Already rich men are beginning to accumulate estates. In ten years these estates will have greatly increased in number. In twenty-five years, we will have a well-established landlord system. In half a century, the man who is landless but ambitious to own a little plot on which to grow enough to support a wife and family, will be forced to pay a high price for a small farm. If the

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By STAFF WRITERS

price is too high, he will gather in the by-ways of the great cities and add to the number of grunting, grumbling, dangerous poor. These problems cannot be avoided, but their severity may be modified by wise legislation.



THIS picture is not drawn to create despair. Rather, would we arouse a sensible people to action. The public domain should be preserved for posterity. Canada has arrived at the point where it would be wise for the Dominion Government to cease giving free-grant land. During the past five years much land worth \$5, \$10, \$15 and even \$20 an acre has been given free of charge by the Dominion Government to new settlers. This encourages new settlers but it lessens the public wealth and impairs the heritage of future generations. Is it wise to give everything to the present generation?

We are all anxious to see the population grow, to see the land brought under cultivation, to see our cities expand and to have our industries and our commerce increase. It is a reasonable desire, but should it not be reasonably controlled? Would it not be a reasonable policy to reserve some of the present valuable public domain for the native-born Canadians of the future? Sixty thousand United States farmers came into Canada last year and received free farms. This year there will be seventy thousand. Next year there will be one hundred thousand. This is all very well; these are good settlers and they are welcome. But what about the sons of Canadian farmers who want land ten years from to-day, fifteen years hence, twenty-five years hence? If we have nothing to give them, will they be satisfied when they are told, "The Government gave it all away to foreigners in the early years of the century." Will they be pleased when we tell them to go to the land companies and to private speculators?



THESE are questions which should be seriously considered by the Minister of the Interior and by the House of Commons. A date should be fixed, after which free-grant land within the Western provinces shall not be given away except in limited quantities. Indeed the problem is more pressing in the West than it is in Ontario and Quebec. The unoccupied land of the West is much more valuable and is more eagerly sought than the unoccupied land of the East. Ontario and Quebec have more Crown-owned land to-day than Alberta and Saskatchewan; yet these two eastern provinces part with their land less willingly than do the authorities who control the Crown domain in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

It is the business of statesmen to look into the future, foresee its needs and its problems and to take such present action as in their wisdom seems advisable. We would respectfully suggest to the Administration at Ottawa that the question of limiting the distribution of free-grant land is one demanding serious consideration. The tremendous crop in the West this year has made all Western land almost double in value. There is no longer any necessity of giving land free to induce settlement. We venture the opinion that the abolition of homesteading forever would not seriously retard the advance of the Western settlements. If we are right in our impression, then homesteading and pre-empting should be speedily abolished except under special circumstances and for unusual reasons.



WINNIPEG is still pressing its claims on the Dominion Government for a grant of two and a half million dollars for the Selkirk Centennial. This claim is endorsed by Alberta and Saskatchewan. Why not take the next million acres of free-grant land and sell it at \$2.50 an acre and give the proceeds to the West for this event which it so much desires? The original request to the Ottawa authorities embodied a similar suggestion. Of course, the consent of the Alberta and Saskatchewan legislatures, the parties