

In the towns, too, the foreign citizens have been accessible to the few amongst the English-speaking population willing to give them a genuine welcome into Canadian life and thought.

In those back settlements, however, where the homestead regulations have permitted the foreign immigrants to form, as it were, clusters or hives, the picture is a very different one. It was in these settlements that the Manitoba newspaperman found but a small fraction of the children at school, and in any case only schools enough to accommodate half of them.

The settlers in these districts are, for the most part, wretchedly poor. The country is mainly bush, and besides having to make clearances for their farms, they find much of their land swampy and stony. English-speaking immigrants, having, as a rule, greater financial resources than the Slav settlers, refuse to look at these districts and pass on to the open prairie. In the few cases where English-speaking settlers had gone into these districts they packed up and got out when the foreign immigrants began to come in.

During the past ten years Polish-Ruthenian immigrants have densely populated a large part of the hinterland of Manitoba. They have crowded in so thickly that many of the homesteads have been subdivided into forty-acre farms, most of them supporting, or trying to support, large and increasing families. The majority of the male settlers are obliged during the summer to work in the towns and cities of Manitoba in order to eke out the meagre yield of their farms.

It is not pleasant to have to state that where emissaries of "civilization" have come in contact with these Slav settlers the contact has, in nine cases out of ten, been unfortunate, to use a euphemism, for the settlers. At the stores along the line of railway the Polish-Ruthenian customers, ignorant of English, of Canadian weights and measures, and

of the Canadian monetary system, have all too frequently been looked upon as "easy marks" and deliberately cheated. Instances have been found where the settlers actually had recourse to the expedient of purchasing their groceries item by item, as separate deals, in order to avoid being plundered.

Time and again the well-dressed wood-buyer from Winnipeg has given these settlers fifty cents and less a cord for wood hauled many miles over rough forest trails and through stretches of swamp. In Winnipeg, but sixty miles away, the same wood was selling for five and six dollars a cord. Roads, it may be mentioned in passing, there are practically none in these Slav settlements. They are promised profusely at election times, but with the government candidate returned and the whiskey bills paid for, the plight of the settlers is regularly forgotten.

INTO the Slav settlements of Manitoba it has been impossible to get English-speaking teachers to go. The conditions are obviously such as to preclude the possibility of employing girl teachers there. The consequence has been that Polish-Ruthenian bilingual teachers, speaking English imperfectly and trained under a makeshift plan, inaugurated by the government, are the only pedagogues these settlements know. As a class these bilingual teachers have worked faithfully. They have, with all their shortcomings, saved the Slav settlements of Manitoba from total educational darkness.

What of the church? someone asks. Chiefly bickerings and strifes! is the uninspiring answer. There are few resident clergy in the settlements, the people being too poor to support them. The clergy who do penetrate into the settlements are intermittent visitors from Winnipeg and even further afield. It would be extreme, perhaps, to say that the church has done no socializing or civilizing work in these settlements, but it is certainly

true that it divides these unfortunate people more than it unites them.

Racial and religious animosities from the old lands of Europe are resurrected in these hinterlands of Manitoba and around, and even inside the rough church buildings deeds of violence have frequently taken place. The Roman Catholics and the Greek Catholics have each a certain following amongst these Slav settlers, though neither church appears to have a close hold upon them. A Protestant church, organized amongst these people by the Presbyterians, also seems to have a struggling existence.

Speaking generally, the Slav settlers of Manitoba are characterized by much independence of spirit. Many of them call themselves Socialists, but they do this usually as a protest against the church and without having more than a vague idea as to what Socialism means.

Such in outline are the conditions obtaining in the rural Slav settlements of Manitoba, where there are living to-day a population of from 20,000 to 30,000 Poles, Ruthenians, Russians and other Slavs. Their numbers are rapidly increasing and Manitoba can no longer ignore the Macedonian cry which goes up from them. Through sheer merit these people have lived down contempt and derision. Indifference and neglect have also been tried and failed. On Manitoba's horizon there looms up now the uneducated child, the potential criminal. And the home-made criminals may be the worst.

The foreigner has turned. The despised garlic-eater fills the English-speaking Canadian with terror and dismay. Our chance comes once again. Shall we offer these sons and daughters of the Slav lands of Europe, these timid children of other skies, the open hand of genuine fellowship? Shall we honestly offer them our education, our culture, our heritage, the best we have, or shall we once again choose the niggard, churlish course?



Have We Lost Our Independence?

"MONEY makes the mare go." It is wonderful how essential it is to every human enterprise to get money to go on with. This is not a joke—it is a novel idea to you, as you will see, if you will take a good look at it in bulk. The first problem of the fighting of the Balkan War, was money. They had the men, and they had the munitions, and they had a lot of food; but they could never have pushed through their campaign if they had not got money—from somebody. The whole difficulty in China is over money. Neither Government nor rebels can accomplish much without money. And it must be outside money—money loaned them by people they never saw and never expect to see. A large part of the Mexican problem has been money. If either side had had money enough, it could probably have got arms. Every last municipality in Canada wants money. Its citizens cannot pave their own streets or dig their own drains, without the consent of some fore-handed gentleman in England or Holland or elsewhere. We seem to have no way of doing anything without first borrowing money from a total stranger.

DID it ever occur to you what an artificial state of affairs this is? The French peasant either doesn't care whether the Balkan mountaineer goes to war, or he wishes that he wouldn't; yet the French peasant gives his permission to the Balkan mountaineer to fight, or he couldn't fight. A thousand Canadians, living on the prairie, want a better road to connect them with the local post office. The natural thing would be for them to ask nobody's permission, but to go ahead and build the road. Yet that is the last thing they think of doing. They would regard it as impossible. What they do is to pay an agent to go over to Holland and ask a "mijnheer," who could hardly find their province on the map, to let them build their own road. And where does the Hollander get his authority? Out of his money-bags. He happens to have more capital than he can invest at home, so he loans it to us, and we go to work.

IT looks like an illusion as you peer into it. Here are Canadian municipalities actually going without modern conveniences which they greatly want, and which would make them richer individually if they had them, because they cannot borrow a certain amount of stored-up food and clothing and material from a European who cares not two straws for them; and all the while they have got the food and clothing and material right in their own town—or near it—and would only buy it with European money if they were lucky enough to float their loan. What magic prevents them from helping themselves to their own things? It is like the old story of the Irish famine. The Irish were starving with plenty of food in Ireland. The warm-hearted Irish in New York went to the trouble of loading a ship full of food and sending it across the Atlantic to the home country; but they could just as well have sent a cheque to buy the food which was already in Dublin, Cork and Belfast. A similar cheque could have come from the Dutch money-lender, had the Irish peasantry been able to borrow. But lacking the "open sesame" of a slip of paper, they starved in the midst of plenty.

THAT is not the way that the primitive world did things. If a primitive community wanted a road, they went and built it. We are much more advanced—we do without the road. If a primitive community were starving with plenty of food within reach, they simply took it. We are better Christians—we starve. "Peace, sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by," is nothing to us who sit helpless in the toils of our intricate and complicated modern system of civilization, and do without the things we need because the electric-bell service has broken down and we cannot get our "order" through to the central office in the customary way. We are exactly like a guest in a big hotel, who sits thirsty in his expensive room because his telephone to the office will not work. If he were staying in a good old "dollar-a-day" house, he would simply trot down stairs to the pump.

THERE is a lot of capital in Canada, which is nothing in the world but the product of past labour stored up. But we are not accustomed to

using it—that is all. Capital is cheaper in Europe because there is more of it and less for it to do; but there is nothing more silly than to see a municipality composed of comparatively wealthy men getting along without needed municipal improvements when they have lots of money in their pockets to pay for them. They have the stored-up labour at their command and could go ahead; but they prefer to expose their families to death from using a bad water supply, or to disease from an imperfect sewage system, or to untold inconvenience from wretched pavements—to say nothing of the wear and tear on their vehicles—to taking the unconventional course of employing their own capital. They could afford, indeed, to pay themselves a higher rate of interest much better than they can afford to wait.

THIS is not a criticism of our getting money in the cheapest market when we can get it. It is merely a protest against our acting as if cheap money were an absolutely necessary condition antecedent to our doing anything. I remember some years ago hearing of a young man who had built himself a fine house because he had been able—through some personal connections—to get the money in England at almost nominal interest. The result was that he could give his family a beautiful home while the rest of us—who were quite as well off as he was—felt compelled to keep ours in rented houses. I am satisfied now that we were simply under a paralyzing delusion. We were quite as able as he to build a home. He had to go into debt, which we could have done. All the advantage he had was a little lower rate of interest. We could have met the higher, at any rate, by borrowing a smaller sum. But none of us thought of doing it. That "easy money" from abroad looked like "found money" to us; and we had found no money. Great enterprises, of course, must go outside of the country for capital, be they willing to pay ever so much for it. But it is a little cowardly and a lot foolish for us to halt our minor operations because the European money-lender has an attack of "cold feet."

THE MONOCLE MAN.

Great Music

THE West is no doubt a very musical country. There are more choral societies and brass bands and good amateur orchestras in the prairie provinces according to population than anywhere else in America. But the music that makes the most mirth on the prairies now for the greatest number of people is not in any band, orchestra or chorus. It is the diapason and vox humana of the threshing-machine, set in the key of Number One Hard.