

THE PHILOSOPHER.

SOME EASTERN TALK.

That strenuous advocate of protectionism, the *Montreal Gazette*, in the course of an article on the relative importance of Eastern Canada and Western Canada, said, with the view of putting the Westerners in their place, that the hay crop of Ontario alone last year was equal in value to the whole wheat crop of the three Prairie Provinces. This absurd statement has had considerable currency in the East. Immediately after the *Gazette* launched it Mr. Russell, of the Manufacturers' Association, repeated it in his widely quoted address before the Canadian Club in Toronto. The *Gazette*, not content with multiplying the Ontario hay crop, went on to greater flights of imagination by declaring that "the harvest in the province of Quebec, which the Western people never consider of any importance at all, was more valuable than the total product of the West last year." It has been pointed out to the *Gazette*, in regard to its exuberant attempt to make it appear that the total Western wheat crop last year amounted to no more than Ontario's hay crop, that the official figures of the value of Ontario's hay crop are \$46,021,740, and of the value of the wheat crop of the three Prairie Provinces \$115,391,000; which has reduced the *Gazette* to silence, not only about the Ontario hay crop, but also about "the harvest in the province of Quebec," in regard to which frequent challenges to produce the figures have failed to rouse it from its dumbness.

A SLIGHT OMISSION.

A protectionist paper in the East reads the farmers of the West a lecture. "The Canadian farmer, whether in the East or in the West," it says, "in his own field is his own sovereign. He owes allegiance to no master, lives under good laws, is not taxed high even for public luxuries. All that we ask of him is that he school himself to get the best that is in his land and to return to the soil that which it needs to continue the outpouring of its fruits." The protectionist journal from which this quotation is taken, omits to mention the thing which it requires from the farmer as being, in its mind, the most important of all, namely, that he shall let the beneficiaries of protection rule him, and that he shall not presume to interfere with them in the exercise of their patriotic wisdom.

THE WEST PAYS ITS FULL SHARE.

Nothing could be more preposterously insolent and unfounded than the assertions which have of late found frequent utterance in the East to the effect that the East furnished the money that bought what is now Western Canada from the Hudson Bay Company, and also the money that has built the railways in this country; and that, in a word, the East has created and maintained the West, and that therefore the Western farmers owe the East a debt of gratitude which should prevent their presuming to speak out their mind in regard to the public affairs of Canada and questions of national policy or their expecting that any attention should be paid at Ottawa to their opinions and their demands. It would not be fair to the people in the East as a whole to entertain for a moment the idea that such assertions express their mind. But the fact is not to be overlooked that such assertions have appeared in print in Eastern journals, and have figured in certain public addresses made in the East during the past month or two. In reply to them, it is only necessary to point out in regard to the purchase of Rupert's Land now Western Canada—from the Hudson's Bay Company forty years ago for £300,000, or a million and a half dollars, and to all other Federal expenditures in regard to the West, that such expenditures were all provided for by Dominion debentures, and that the people of the West have borne, and are bearing, their full share in carrying and providing for that and all other national indebtedness. As for the railways, they are constructed and maintained by funds derived from three sources—money subsidies, land grants and earnings from traffic. They also borrow money in the money markets of the world, but as this money must be repaid from their traffic revenue or the proceeds of their land sales, it need not be separately considered. The Western farmer, by cultivating his homestead, increases the value of the railway lands, and also swells the volume of the railway revenue from traffic. The railways thus receive their richest returns from the land and the labor of the West. More than that, railway building on the prairie is the easiest and cheapest of all railway building. The costliest construction of the C.P.R. is the section around the north shore of Lake Superior and the Rocky Mountains section, neither of which were necessities for the farmers of the West. That is to say, if the sole and only idea had been to provide railways for the farmers of the West, the prairie section would have more than paid their way, and railway connection between

Winnipeg and Lake Superior would have furnished an outlet by lake and rail. It was for national and Imperial reasons that all-rail route across the Dominion was wanted; and every Canadian may justly take pride in the national spirit that insisted upon the construction of that route. To attempt now to charge the whole expenditure up against the Western farmers comes pretty near being the extreme limit of cool audacity. The progress and prosperity of Canada as a whole are based upon the development of the West, and the men who are developing the West are the farmers of the West.

CANADA'S CENTURY.

We are in the beginning of the century that has well been said to be destined to be Canada's century, as the last century was the century of the United States. The census of the United States taken last year gives a total population, not including Alaska or any dependencies, of 92,000,000, an increase of 15,371,000 over the population in 1901. That was a greater increase than in any previous decade, but not the highest percentage of increase. The highest percentage of increase was reached in the decade from 1790 to 1800, when the population rose from 3,920,000 to 5,308,000. Another decade in which a very high percentage of increase was attained was between 1870 and 1880, in the boom time after the Civil War, the era of transcontinental railway building, when the population increased from 38,558,000 to 50,155,000. If that rate of increase had been maintained the present population of the United States would be 110,000,000. There is a disposition to compare the progress of Canada in the present century with that of the United States in the nineteenth. The fact that the United States had 5,308,000 people in 1800, and that this country had 5,371,000 in 1901, lends a certain fascination to the comparison. But the similarity is only on the surface. There is no real resemblance between the condition of Canada to-day and the condition of the United States a hundred years ago. The western migration of settlers in the United States a hundred years ago was a slow and dangerous process, and it is wonderful indeed that such progress was made. The condition of Canada at the present time has more resemblance to that of the United States a generation ago, or less, when the railways were carrying thousands of settlers into the Western States. And this country draws not only from the sources of the best immigration into the United States at that time, but from the United States in immense numbers. There is reason, therefore, for counting confidently upon a greater increase of population in this country in the next ten years than the United States had in the corresponding period of the last century.

WHAT IS A PARLIAMENT?

Mr. Patrick O'Hea, solicitor, of Durban, Natal, and formerly a member of the British House of Commons, appears to be an Irishman without a sense of humor. He has written to a London paper a vigorous protest against the use of "M.P." by members of the new Parliament of United South Africa, suggesting instead "U.R." meaning "Union Representative." He thinks that the South African legislators who attach to their names the sacred letters "M.P." are guilty of "consummate effrontery." To a Canadian the idea that members of the Parliament of Great Britain should have a monopoly of "M.P." is rather amusing. Members of the Dominion Parliament have been so styled since Confederation. When Australia became a Commonwealth, the members of its Federal Parliament also assumed the time-honored letters. The same custom obtains in the Dominion Parliament of New Zealand. While an M.P. by any other name, as Juliet says, would smell as sweet, we Canadians—and in this our fellow-citizens of the other overseas self-governing nations of the Empire feel with us—would not think of adopting any method of designating our legislators which would imply that we are not in full partnership with Great Britain. The legislative body which governs the 3,800,000 square miles of Canada, the 3,000,000 square miles of Australia or the 500,000 square miles of United South Africa is surely worthy of the name of Parliament?

MILLIONS OF CARIBOU IN THE BARREN GROUNDS.

By all accounts, the caribou in the Barren Grounds, between the Mackenzie River and Hudson Bay, must greatly outnumber the millions of buffalo in the time when the buffalo were most numerous on the prairies. Thompson Seton tells us that the Barren Grounds caribou number more than 30,000,000, and he adds that there may be twice that number of them. He says that in the very largest estimate the number killed annually by the Indians, the Eskimos and the Arctic whalers does not exceed 40,000, which is a mere fraction of the natural increase every year. Colonel Jones tells of standing on a hill in the middle of the passing herds of caribou going to their winter range.

He had a clear view some ten miles each way, he says, and there were caribou as far as he could see. They averaged, he figured, not less than one hundred caribou to the acre, and they kept passing him at the rate of three miles an hour. He did not know how long they took in passing that point, but at another place they were four days in passing. "The whole visible world seemed to be a moving mass of caribou." The Barren Grounds, where they thrive and multiply, are over a million square miles in extent, and are described as "bare of trees, but the plains are covered with rich, rank grass, like New England meadows, and in some stretches the herbage is as rank as on the Indiana prairies." Their protection is one of the matters in charge of the Mounted Police, and they form a national asset which should be—and there is every reason to hope will be—preserved. What other country in the world contains such abundance of incalculable and varied resources as this Canada of ours?

A DIFFERENT LAND FROM THIS.

Simply inconceivable to the person born on this continent is the difference between the conditions of life in this country and the United States and the conditions in such a country as Russia, reflected in the fact of the increasing prevalence of suicide in the Czar's dominions. A St. Petersburg letter in the *London Times* recently stated that there had been 62 suicides in one week in that city, and that the epidemic of self-destruction was spreading among the peasantry. "Half-distracted parents," we read, "have formed a society here to save their children from self-destruction. This society teaches the young that while Russia is at present utterly disorganized and cast down, a better day is coming, and that the rising generation must nerve itself to hasten that day." It is such tidings from the Old World that give even those of us whose lot is not the most fortunate cause to rejoice that we are living our lives in the New World.

THE EXPLODED "EXODUS" MYTH.

As an exploded fiction, the mythical exodus of American settlers from this country back across the boundary ranks with Mr. Cook's Munchausen discovery of the North Pole. Both were cases of ways that were dark and tricks that were vain—particularly the exodus myth, which was decidedly a vain waste of imagination and printer's ink, which failed utterly to produce the desired results. It is interesting to know that there was one "exoduster," who went from Alberta to the Meeting Creek district in Montana. When he realized his mistake he posted in his shack, before starting back across the boundary line again, the following legend, either for the relief of his feelings or the information of his successor:—"Four miles from a neighbor, sixteen from a railroad, fourteen from a school, forty-one from a church and one hundred from a Canadian." The legend, which was sent to the *Camrose Canadian* by a subscriber in the Meeting Creek district, went on to tell—let us hope, as an imaginative touch—of the undesirable proximity of a horse thief. It also implied a certain nearness to the future abode of the wicked, and wound up by announcing that its author was abandoning his shack and going back to Alberta to make a fresh start. The original piece of paper with that legend inscribed on it ought to be secured and preserved as the only evidence of the exodus of American settlers back across the line from Western Canada, of which there were such wondrous stories told in so many newspapers in the United States last year, those stories having been prepared by fiction writers engaged for that purpose by certain railroad and land interests in the States.

COSTLY OFFICIAL CARELESSNESS.

The fact which recently came to light that the Dominion Government had lost \$100,000 through the failure of an official to send a certain notification within the proper time after the collapse of the Quebec bridge to the Guarantee Company which was liable under bond to that extent in connection with the contract for the erection of that structure, is one of those discouraging things which tend to lessen faith in the all-sufficing efficacy of Government supervision and control. As in the case of devices for preventing accidents on railroads, the factor of human carelessness or neglect or failure from whatever cause is one that cannot be absolutely eliminated. It is an obvious thing to say, of course, that if a private company suffered such a loss, the official whose carelessness caused it would be looking for another position within a few hours after his carelessness was found out. Indeed, he would be lucky to get off so lightly. But nothing that could be done to him would secure the better of its bond, which required a notification to be given within a specified time of the disaster which made it liable to pay the \$100,000 of insurance money, is a case of legal proceedings. There is no doubt that it can be done about it.