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FARM AND DAIRY & RURAL HOME



We Welcome Practical Progressive Ideas.

Trade increases the wealth and glory of a country; but its real strength and stamina are to be looked for among the cultivators of the land.—Lord Chatham.

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No. 46

Who are the True Makers of Canada?

They are Those who in Obscurity and Poverty Made it with Axe and Spade, with Plow and Scythe

THE fall of 1910 furnished one event in Canadian history to which the careful historian of the future will give more prominence than it now receives—the siege of Ottawa. It was not a military siege in any sense. The besieging army, a throng of over 400 farmers from every part of Canada, filled both House and galleries on that memorable occasion. They had come, not as other deputations had come—to demand special privileges, but to ask that the farmers of Canada be given a square deal, and principally that they be relieved of the incubus of the protective tariff. Before proceeding to the House of Commons, the farmers held a meeting of their own. Speakers from the West presented their case and presented it well. E. C. Drury spoke for Ontario, with all of the oratorical ability that is his. And then came Quebec's turn. No speaker had been appointed to represent the Quebec delegates. Finally, one of them called for Gordon Sellar. A fine, erect old man stepped forward. He started to speak in a deep, rich voice that carried forcibly to the furthestmost corner of the great auditorium. As he warmed to his subject, the eyes of old Gordon Sellar snapped fire; the whole man seemed to vibrate with indignation at the economic wrongs of which he spoke.

Five years have passed since that memorable siege of Ottawa. Gordon Sellar had slipped out of my mind until just the other day, when I had an opportunity to read the story of his life as told by himself. I soon found that the old man with the thundering voice was one of the real makers of Canada. I will not here attempt to re-tell the story of his life. I would like, however, to re-tell certain parts of that story, which impressed me particularly because of their bearing on the national problems of to-day. Gordon Sellar was born in Glasgow. His mother had been a serving maid; his father was a soldier. When four years old his father was killed at Waterloo, and then began the hard struggle with poverty. I believe it must have been from that mother of his that Gordon Sellar derived the traits that has made him beloved by so many.

"Mother kept on working, washing or house-cleaning, a neighbor being asked to look after me," he tells in his simple manner. "When I got old enough she would tell me while I was in bed where she was going, and in the evening I would go and meet her. Sometimes, not often, she got sewing to do at home, and those were bright days. We talked all the time and she



One of the Real Empire Builders.

John Ramsay, who passed away at his home in Eden Mills, Wellington Co., Ont., a few weeks ago, was one of the real makers of Canada. For over forty years Mr. Ramsay was a member of the Dominion Grange. He was one of the men who laid the foundations of Canadian prosperity by hard work under pioneer conditions, a group of men who have passed away, one by one, unknown to the public of to-day, but nevertheless leaving behind them the impress of their sterling worth.

taught me much; not simply to read and write and cast little sums, but about everything she knew. My reading book was the Gospel of John, which she said was full of comfort, and it was then my faith in Christ took root."

Then came hard times. The mills were closed and there was little work to do. The mother starved herself to feed the boy, and finally death took her away from the struggle; one of the many victims of economic conditions, which fail to supply work for the illing hands and afford the best evidence of the incapacity of statesmen. His poverty-stricken friends helped Gordon for a while (for the poor are always the best friends of the poor), but finally he decided to walk to the old home of his mother, the parish of Dundonald. There he fell in with old friends of his mother in the family of Andrew Anderson, who

gave him a home. So ended the first chapter in the life of Gordon Sellar.

Why Mr. Anderson Emigrated

I can fancy the indignation with which Gordon Sellar wrote the second chapter of his book. As I read, I could feel my own blood nearing the boiling point. Mr. Anderson's lease ran out, and he received notice that the rent would be raised. During his lease, he had made many improvements at his own cost, and asked that at least these be paid for, but he remonstrated in vain with the lord's agent. About that time his "master" returned to his country estate and Mr. Anderson determined to see him. The flunkey who met him at the door treated him with disdain. As he stood there a finely dressed lady stepped into the hall. Pausing she cried, "Tomplins, what does that common-looking man want here? Tell him to go to the servants' entry." Anderson persisted, however, and finally got an audience with the nobleman. He stated his case. Without a word his lordship turned and touched the bell. On the flunkey scurrying he said to him, "Show this fellow to the door," and took up his newspaper. Then Anderson made his resolution, "Dear as every acre of this farm is to me," said he, "I will leave it and go where the man who works the land may own it, and where there are no lords, dukes, nor barons. I am a man, and never again will I ask as a favor of any fellow mortal with a title what is my due."

We in Canada can hardly understand social conditions that make the social parasite an aristocratic autocrat and a real producer of wealth a man to be scorned and sneered at by an idle, so-called nobility. The making of such conditions, however, is simplicity itself. The land in Scotland, then as now, belonged to the few. Life itself depended on access to the land, and nothing is truer than that the men who own the land, own the people who must dwell upon it, and they may treat them as they please. I sometimes fear that we have here in Canada, in our great landed estates, the first stage in the development of the social system that drove John Anderson and his family from their native land. Along with them came young Gordon Sellar.

In Canada at Last

It was a long, hard voyage to Canada, but we will pass over the hardships that they endured before Montreal was reached. These hardships were trebled in the voyage up to the lakes to Toronto in small, overcrowded boats. Their