

"THE LATEST PHASE OF INSANITY."

There is a form of lunacy abroad in this and other lands at present, and it is of a very dangerous kind. It consists in a tendency to believe and act on the principle that mere lapse of time without any change of conduct will set things that have gone wrong right again. "If we could only gain time" is its motto, "things will come right." This Micawber-ism is extensively applied, and carried out logically to its conclusion, for "something" always does "turn up"—wrong side up—and then the reversal of that unfortunate condition involves more than enough of us in much care and labour, deep agony and grievous loss.

To call this a form of insanity is not too strong language. It is simply correctly descriptive. For insanity is a condition of being in which the will and intellect, or spiritual nature of man has lost the power to act through and control the rational and physical part of him. An insane person is one who is not responsible for his actions—that is whose external surroundings and physical appetites control *him*—not *he* them. If then we have found men plunging on in a course they have found to be wrong and disastrous, allowing themselves to be driven along further by the reaction of their own actions and transactions, hoping that when these have run their course all will be right, and apparently unconscious of any ability within themselves to curb the tide of events, are we not justified in describing such men as moral lunatics? Can we describe them as anything else?

Now any one who has lived in Canada a decade of years and has cared to study, not only the external phenomena of society and social habits, but has inquired a little into the internal motives which actuate and form these external phenomena, must have been impressed with one phase of it, viz., that the average Canadian "hates to think." Nor is this peculiarity confined to Canadians born and bred, but infects men of all nationalities who have settled here. Neither is it limited to the poorer classes. It is still more decidedly conspicuous among business men and the wealthier portion of the community as well as in the learned professions. The Canadian mind loves to occupy itself with externals only, or at least chiefly. Its conversation abounds in deep interest in individuals with whom it is socially acquainted. It becomes quite lively over their personal peculiarities, their houses, their lands, their speculations or peculations, the net results of their business acumen or daring, &c., &c. It is not what they *are*, so much as what they *have*, which is the absorbing topic. *Things* which are the result of life—not the life itself—is what men here care to study.

Canada is not *quite* alone in this idiosyncrasy. The whole civilised world is, more or less, infected with it. But Canada does belong to the "more" section—not to the "less."

When men are thus so absorbed in what are called realities, but what are actually only results, they get blind to causes altogether, and so become the creatures of circumstances, and not the controllers of them.

This is exactly the history of the present "hard times" in Canada. We have studied only hard facts; have become delirious over results. We have judged only from the outward appearance, and our judgment has therefore neither been right nor righteous even as regards the facts or realities on which our whole wills were bent. Because some certain individual bore the outward signs of having made an ample fortune in a certain trade, we judged there must be lots of money in it, and if only we could get money or credit enough by a good bank account to "swing" as big a business, the same results must follow. It was a fact, we knew, that this was the process whereby that other man attained all his outward prosperity. We therefore aimed at the same facilities, feeling sure that if these were had, the rest would follow, as effect from cause. We forgot to consider that the causes of these effects might now, more than possibly, be wholly altered. We reasoned only from external effect to external cause, and stopped there. As well might we have judged that because this predecessor of ours in the path to wealth of this special trade had waxed so rich, therefore there could be no more money in it for any one else. Either conclusion would be equally justifiable, and equally correct.

Be this as it may, very many of us have, to our cost, reasoned blindly towards the former conclusion, and, having attained our wishes in the one respect of large facilities, have found these quite in excess of trade requirements—have found that it tended to penury and everything else but wealth. And *then* the insanity already treated of broke out in us. Instead of facing the facts manfully and checking our career with all the force that was in us, we used that force to drive harder than our neighbour and distance him. We let externals drive us, lost control of ourselves and our affairs, and trusted to "time" to "make things come right."

And time, which is but the dial plate on the face of the inexorable and beneficent Divine Law which operates only good, and not evil, *will* set even *things* right. But the Divine Law works from within outwards—not from without inwards—and a change of will, of motive, of character in men, manifested by them in action must precede. It must come. It is coming. Men are being forced to look at the wreck they have made out of the *things* they

loved and lived and longed for, and this country is destined yet to develop character, thought, rationality.

And the *last* form which this blind reasoning from appearances has taken—viz., the "N.P."—will be the *first* to go. Men formerly made money out of their goods, imported or manufactured, and, full of a superstitious reverence for and faith in the power of government, thought by means of law to kill the inexorable divine law of supply and demand. The experiment must fail. For any increase of cost must lessen demand. And if the cost be not increased, as is contended, then the purchasing power is not increased either; and out of *nothing* it is impossible to make *something*. Yet to try to do collectively by legal enactment what so many have been trying to do individually for so many years—i.e., to make something out of nothing—was simply to take the course already described, to rush further on in a wrong course and expect it to come right as a reward for perseverance.

But we can, and we will become men, God helping us, and by change of will, motive, character, from love of *things* to love of right principles and noble aims we shall find enough and to spare of the good things of life in the resources of our splendid territory to leave none in want, and give the ablest and most willing to serve others the largest share of the enjoyment of them. Of course when that is quite realized the Millenium will be upon us, and we will be indeed a chosen people and a chosen land; but it may take us about a thousand years to bring it about. So let us begin at once.

Eusebius.

OUR NORTH WEST.

No. I.

Having lately picked up an able and powerfully written pamphlet, entitled "The Political Destiny of Canada," I feel called upon by the interest I take in the North West (the land of my adoption) to make a few remarks upon that part of the pamphlet which bears more immediately upon the north-western portion of our Dominion. With the general conclusions at which the writer arrives, and with the sledge-hammer arguments by which he seeks to enforce them, as I am neither politician nor financier I have nothing to do, but to those considerations by which he seeks to throw discredit upon that, which I, in common with many others, deem the finest portion of Canada, I feel called upon to oppose a plain statement of fact and observation.

The author of the pamphlet referred to, commences his tirade against the great North West, by referring to the immense expense of management, the keeping up of emigration agencies, &c., entailed upon the country by the possession of this magnificent territory. He, however, altogether omits to set over against this item, the income which the Dominion derives from that section, in the shape of custom dues, inland revenue returns, and sale of land. When we consider that in the year 1878 the custom receipts at the Port of Winnipeg alone amounted to \$224,379; when we add to this the large annual receipts from inland revenue, and when we take into consideration the large and ever increasing revenue from the sale of Dominion Lands in and beyond the Province of Manitoba, we shall easily perceive that the credit side of the account, as between Canada and the North West, is not altogether a blank.

I next proceed to examine the ground of complaint which the writer urges against the various Colonization Societies throughout Ontario and Quebec. It is as follows:—"That these societies are busily at work inducing our farmers to pull up stakes and move to the North West." Let me give your readers a specimen of the process which "A British Immigrant" so vigorously deprecates. There has been of late a considerable exodus to Manitoba from a section of the Province of Quebec lying north of Montreal. Happening to visit that part of the country recently, I enquired of some of the farmers how much wheat they raised to the acre. I was somewhat astonished when I was told that they raised no wheat at all, that the only crop which they could cultivate was oats, and not much of them. Now some of these "unpatriotic" individuals to whom our "Immigrant" refers had actually tempted these poor deluded farmers to be guilty of the "madness" of moving to Manitoba and settling there upon land where they can raise an average of 30 bushels of wheat to the acre, and 50 bushels of oats to the acre, where they can raise and feed all the cattle that they require, and where they can see their families grow up around them to be a help instead of a burden to their declining years. Surely the disposition which would interfere with such a change as this, savours much more of a narrow provincialism than of a broad and liberal patriotism. Take another case, a farmer has a good farm, well appointed and clear of debt, with fine buildings and a good orchard, situate, let us say, in the centre of one of the best farming districts in Ontario; our "Immigrant" would, doubtless, pronounce it the height of madness for such an one to dream of moving to "pastures new." But let us suppose (as is very likely to be the case with the sturdy yeoman of Canada) that our farmer, in addition to his other property, is the happy possessor of half a dozen stalwart sons. The question naturally suggests itself, what is he going to do with them? Shall he despatch them to the nearest town, and then force them into the already vastly overcrowded ranks of professional or business life. He certainly cannot supply each of them with a farm;