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SAVING CANADIANS FROM THE DEGENERACY DUE TO INDUSTRIALISM IN CITIES OF OLDER CIVILIZATION

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The prophet has ever been viewed with suspicion, and when, like Cassandra or Jeremiah, his message has been fateful and critical of the doings of the people of his time, such has been received too often with derision and the disturber laughed to scorn.

At a time when Canada from sea to sea is teeming with life and energy, population through immigration increasing by nearly half a million annually, capital to a hitherto unknown degree being brought in for investment, I feel that it is an unenviable task to have to direct the attention of this Association and through it the public to

certain facts which have a very important bearing, not alone on the physical, mental, and moral welfare of our people and nation, but whose results must further become, if the situation remains or increases, as unfortunate for us as have been the effects of similar conditions upon the people of England and are becoming for those of Germany and the United States.

I desire to first direct your attention to the figures taken from the census of the United States for 1910, and that for Canada of June, 1911.

TABLE I (a).
Population of the United States.

	1910.	1900.	1890.	1880.
Total	91,972,206	75,994,575	62,947,714	50,155,783
Rural	49,348,883	45,187,390	40,227,491	35,383,345
Urban	42,623,383	30,797,185	22,720,223	14,772,438
<i>Percentage Distribution.</i>				
Rural	53.7	59.5	63.9	70.5
Urban	46.3	40.5	36.1	29.5
Total increase of United States 1900-1910, 21 per cent.				
Total rural population, 1900	45,197,390	Estimated rural loss without allowing		
Total rural population, 1910	49,348,813	for any natural increase in rural		
Actual increase in census period	4,151,423	immigrants 4,656,815		
Estimated natural increase at 1.2 per		1901	487,918	
cent. per annum	5,423,686	1902	648,743	
Total urban population, 1900	30,797,185	1903	857,846	
Total urban population, 1910	42,623,383	1904	1,020,499	
Actual increase in census period	11,826,198	1905	1,020,499	
Estimated natural increase at 1.5 per		1906	1,110,499	
cent. per annum	4,619,528	1907	1,285,249	
Total U.S. immigration in ten years,		1908	782,870	
1901-1911	8,789,386	1909	751,786	
Estimated immigrant farmers and farm		1910	1,041,570	
laborers, based on data of 1911	2,636,815			

TABLE I (b).
Population of Canada.

	1911.	1901.	1891.	<i>Percentage Distribution.</i>			
Total	7,204,838	5,371,315	4,833,239	Rural	54.4	62.3	67.9
Urban	3,280,444	2,021,799	1,537,089	Urban	45.6	37.7	32.1
Rural	3,924,394	3,349,516	3,296,141	Total increase for all Canada, 1901-1911, 34 per cent.			

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SAVING CANADIANS FROM THE DEGENERACY, ETC.

Total rural population, 1901	3,349,516	Estimated rural loss without allowing for natural increase of rural immi- grants	340,660
Total rural population, 1911	3,924,394		
Actual rural increase in census period.	575,878		
Actual percentage of rural increase.	17.6		
Estimated natural increase at 1.2% per annum	401,941		
Total urban population, 1901	2,021,799		
Total urban population, 1911	3,280,444		
Actual increase in census period	1,258,645		
Actual percentage increase	62.5		
Estimated natural increase at 1.5 per cent per annum	303,269		
Total immigration to Canada, 1901- 1911	1,715,326		
Estimated farmers and farm laborers, based on 1911 (at 30 per cent.)....	514,597		
		<i>Canadian Immigration by Years.</i>	
		1901-2	67,379
		1902-3	128,364
		1903-4	130,331
		1904-5	146,266
		1905-6	189,064
		1906-7	124,667
		1907-8	262,469
		1908-9	146,908
		1909-10	208,794
		1910-11	311,084
		Total	1,715,326

The first obvious fact gathered from the tables is that the population of the United States increased in the decade just 21 per cent., while that of Canada increased by 34 per cent.

It will be further observed that the urban populations have notably advanced relatively to the totals in both countries, that in the United States from 40.5 to 46.3 per cent. of the total, and that of Canada from 37.7 to 45.6 per cent. of the total in the first instance by almost 6 per cent., and in the latter by 8 per cent.

A still closer examination of the tables shows that the urban population of the United States increased during the period by the enormous amount of 38 per cent., while the rural population increased by only 9.2 per cent. Similarly and in even greater relative proportion in Canada the urban population increased by 62.5 per cent., while the rural increase was only 17.6 per cent.

If we compare the populations which in the two countries might logically be expected in urban and rural districts, we may first estimate the natural increase of that in 1900, which in the urban we may place at 15 per cent. and in the rural at 12 per cent. This in the cities of the United States has been exceeded by 23 per cent., while in the rural population it has fallen to less than 9 per cent. increase over what it was in 1900. In Canada we find that the urban increase has exceeded the normal by 47.5 per cent., and the rural has exceeded the normal by only 5.6 per cent.

At first sight the significance of these comparative figures may not be appreciated until we examine that other influence upon population, viz., immigration.

Thus the total immigration increase in the United States was 11.2 per cent. of the population in 1900, while in Canada it amounted to 31.3 of that in 1901.

Yet another point in the figures is that of the proportion of immigrants who gave farming as their occupation. In the United States the ratio obtained from answers secured at ports of entry was 29 per cent., while in Canada it is estimated at 30 per cent. of the total immigration. Thus in the United States the deficiency in the assumed normal rural increase is over 48 per cent., while that in Canada was 37.5 per cent.

We have thus before us the main facts relating to the urban and rural populations of the two countries, which will help us to study and understand some outstanding phenomena presented by the commercial, industrial, and social life amongst these two peoples in many ways common in their origin and in their civilization.

Most economists are agreed that there is in any well-balanced population a certain proportion of what we may call producers of the raw materials of wealth, which primarily include those foods necessary to the subsistence in health and comfort of any people. As a corollary to this it follows that such foods should be generally distributed and obtainable, at prices possible for every member of such population.

Clearly this depends upon the climate of the country, the industry of the people,

and the effectiveness of their labor-saving devices and production at a low cost. It will further be apparent, when we take Great Britain as an example, that such may be obtained by the alternative process of being able to produce merchandise and own ships through which by exchange such necessities can be equally readily obtained in her colonies or in other countries. Indeed, we find in this instance that although Great Britain produces not more than one-third of the wheat and about the same of the meat necessary to feed her own people, yet she is able to supply both to her people more cheaply than these same articles are supplied to the people of either Canada or the United States, both of which have hitherto supplied her with much of her food.

To illustrate this I quote the following from the London Chronicle of July 17th, 1912.

The most recent statistics show food prices to have risen:

In the United States by 29 per cent.

In Canada by 27 per cent.

In Germany by 40 per cent. since 1902.

In France by 20 per cent. since 1890.

In England by 5 per cent., as food and household commodities together; but as foodstuffs alone by only 2 per cent., and this includes 61 per cent. increase in the price of bacon. Wheat, mutton, sugar, tea, coffee, potatoes, cocoa, are cheaper in England than in 1890.

The last report of the Minister of Labor for Canada shows 256 articles to have increased by 99 per cent., while every paper in the United States points to the present high cost of living, while that country has already become an importer of meats. It is therefore abundantly apparent that unless situated as England is, a country must become the producer of her own needs, if this one supreme problem of prosperity and public health is to be settled satisfactorily; or, in other words, there must be a good majority of prosperous agriculturists in any population, as in Denmark,* if a country is to be contented and really prosperous.

Before turning to the agricultural problem it is well that we examine the social meaning of this enormous growth of both American and Canadian cities. In all Canada there were in 1901, 62 cities and towns

with a population of over 5,000, and only two with a population of over 100,000. There were in all 200 urban municipalities which include the smaller cities and towns of over 2,500 population.

Now had the urban increase of 1,258,645 in Canada largely of immigrants been distributed over these smaller municipalities, from the merely health standpoint it is safe to say such would have been improved over their previous environment. But it is found that of this total increase, 202,750 (75 per cent.) are found in Montreal; 168,495 (80 per cent.), Toronto; 93,695 (22 per cent.), Winnipeg; 27,964 (1,243 per cent.), Regina; 11,891 (10,523 per cent.), Saskatoon; 39,306 (893 per cent.), Calgary; 22,274 (848 per cent.), Edmonton; 73,391 (271 per cent.), Vancouver.

In a word, 639,769 persons have had to be absorbed by a population of 554,506 in eight cities in ten years, or 64,000 annually, and as an individual instance, Winnipeg has had to absorb in a single year one-third of her total population in 1901.

Now it is apparent that in a new western city where no old slums exist, it is inevitable that new buildings be erected; but abundant evidence everywhere can be had that such may be associated with most of the well known evils of overcrowding. The annual reports of the medical officers of Toronto and Winnipeg deal with some of these conditions.

It is not possible within the limits of this paper to enter into the details of the distribution of immigrants by nationalities in the several crowded areas of our cities; but as the history of the growth of cities on this continent everywhere shows peoples of the same nationality, many having the same language, occupations, and social status, tend to congregate in certain areas where old houses become tenements and too often are limited as to inmates only by their floor capacity, the repacity of the landlord and the regulations of the health department.

It is not necessary to indicate that the same results from overcrowding are inevitable in such conditions since New York and Chicago have already demonstrated it, as was shown in New York statistics quoted last year in my paper on "Tuberculosis in Immigrants." Every health officer is aware of the localities which give him most

*Denmark had in 1906 a rural population of 1,565,586 and 1,023,334 of urban.

trouble concerning the acute infections; but the deeper meaning of this urban overcrowding is not arrived at even in the years of a single census.

Dr. F. W. Mott, Pathologist to the London County Asylums, in a paper read April 24th, 1912, before the Royal Sanitary Institute, points out several very important facts, the first being that "the standard of sanity is being yearly raised, a great number of harmless idiots and weak-minded persons who formerly were allowed to roam at large are now gathered into asylums." This does not apply alone to senile dementia which constitutes 23 per cent. of the total 20,000 inmates of London asylums, but under an Act now before the House of Commons this will include a notable number of the feeble-minded, as yet non-registered, or persons which, according to a Royal Commission on the feeble-minded in England and Wales, constitute 4.6 per 1,000 of the total population.

Dr. Mott further states: "The pauper population undoubtedly contributes a much larger ratio of lunatics to the public asylums than the non-pauper population." He then gives a table of all London parishes and the ratio per 1,000 population of all pauper lunatics chargeable to the Poor Law. They run from 2.6-2.8 in Hampstead and Lewisham to 9.2 and 9.5 in St. Giles and Whitechapel.

Any who know London will appreciate the figures as they relate to the pauperism, squalor, and overcrowding of the latter two parishes. Dr. Mott later goes on to remark: "The Royal Sanitary Institute preaches and teaches that the first duty of the State is the prevention of disease; failing that, the cure, and failing that the prolonging of life and the relief of suffering."

"If it can be shown that there is a correlation between insanity, tuberculosis, alcoholism, syphilis, and overcrowding in one-roomed tenements and insanitary dwellings of our large cities, it might be asked whether public money would not be better expended in attempting to solve the housing question than in expending vast sums on sanatoriums and lunatic asylums in the hope of dealing with physical and mental degeneracy."

It will now be proper for us to turn to that part of the problem which especially interests us, viz., the possibility of finding

a remedy for a situation which from the economic, social, and public health standpoints seems to portend evils so disastrous as to demand the serious thought and action of everyone interested in the welfare of our common country.

None, I think, can imagine that any attempt to turn back the veritable flood of immigrants from Canada is either necessary or desirable; but rather that all should be determined that we shall encourage to come only those who will be a social asset of real value as well as a source of material wealth. The areas of territory, untouched by the plough, are in practice immeasurable.

Remember that the total area of Canada is 2,316,684,071 acres, while Alberta in 1911 had but 1.47 persons to the square mile, and the statistics show a disappointingly small number of either our own or incoming people settling upon them. As a natural result of increasing the number of consumers rather than the producers of foods of the people we find in every item an almost continuous rise in wholesale prices since 1900. Thus in a report of the Bureau of Labor for 1911, on wholesale prices, a table is given which shows the following:

TABLE II.

Showing Increase of Prices for 1900-1911.

	Average for 1890-1900.	Prices for 1911.
Grains and fodder	100	145.
Animals and meats	100	146.7
Dairy produce	100	136.2
Fish	100	143.6
Average		143.75

That these prices are but the corollary of decreasing supplies may be learned from the following table taken from the Ontario Bureau of Industries Report:

TABLE III (a).

Giving totals of Different Animals in Ontario in 1905 and 1909.

Cattle.	1905.	1909.
Milk cows	1,106,000	1,075,000
Other cattle	1,782,000	1,593,000
Total on hand	2,888,000	2,668,000
Total slaughtered	714,000	800,228
Sheep and lambs	1,324,000	1,320,000
Sheep sold or slaughtered..	2,584,000	2,767,000
Swine	1,906,000	1,551,000
Sold or slaughtered	2,267,000	1,986,000
Poultry	9,738,000	12,086,000
Sold or slaughtered	3,340,000	4,177,000

The following figures taken from the same report are of much importance in this study, taken in connection with the practically 50 per cent. increase in wholesale prices already given:

TABLE III (b).

Giving Average Farm Products in 1905 and 1909.

	1905.	1909.
	Cts.	Cts.
Wheat, average price	80.0	102.3
Spring wheat	82.3	100.6
Barley	50.3	54.8
Oats	38.3	39.5
Peas	76.4	84.6
Beans	146.	161.
Corn	37.3	42.9

The same Ontario Report supplies the following melancholy data:

TABLE IV.

Showing in 1909 Increase or Decrease in Acreage from Average for Five Years:

	Acres.
Fall wheat	75,000
Spring wheat	21,000
Barley	60,000
Oats	62,000
Peas (increase)	987
Beans (decrease)	3,100
Corn (increase)	13,000
Corn for silo (increase)	70,000
Potatoes (increase)	13,000
Turnips (increase)	12,000

Comparing the human percentage increase in population with that of the products of the farm, the following taken from the North-West census of 1906 is of interest:

TABLE V.

Comparing increase in 1901 over 1891 with that of 1906.

Population.	Increase.	
	Total	Urban
	1901.	1906.
Manitoba	43%	96%
Saskatchewan	182	239
Alberta	153	205
Farm Products.	Increase.	
Manitoba—		
Cattle	49%	
Pigs	59	
Saskatchewan—		
Cattle	182	
Pigs	346	
Alberta—		
Cattle	158	
Pigs	148	

Grain.	Increase.
Manitoba—	
Wheat	43%
Barley	141
Oats	62
Saskatchewan—	
Wheat	450
Barley	700
Oats	700
Alberta—	
Wheat	500
Barley	900
Oats	400

Reverting to the Province of Ontario, whose statistics are most readily comparable, we find that with an assumed natural increase at 12 per cent. in ten years of the rural population of 1,240,969 in 1901, or 148,916, and 30 per cent. of the 404,000 immigrants who gave Ontario as their destination, or 121,200, there should have been an increase of 270,116, or 27 per cent.; whereas, as a matter of fact, there was an absolute loss of population in rural Ontario of 52,184.

For such a condition of affairs than which from a national standpoint, or from the standpoint of the most important Province of the Dominion, nothing in my judgment can be more unfortunate, except the logical consequences which must follow, if some adequate remedy be not applied, we ask ourselves: "What are its real reasons?"

To say that it is due in part to a world-wide tendency existing ever since the introduction of modern methods of transportation is obviously true; to acknowledge that the frequency of intercourse between country and city assists the allurements of urban life is almost unnecessary; but to be satisfied with such answers as adequate are obviously to overlook a certain class of facts, which can only be demonstrated by the most careful study of statistics. For instance, it is found that the increase or decrease in the average number of bushels per acre in 1909 of fall wheat, spring wheat, barley, oats, peas, and beans in Ontario, was +0.6, -1.0, -2.8, -1.0, +0.6 and 1.0, respectively, per acre, while the increases in prices over all items taken together was but 10.5 per cent.

It has already been noted that the increase in wholesale price of all the four classes of foods for all Canada was 43.75

per cent., so that the difference between the two if comparable is 33.25 per cent. It is further proven by the decreases in rural population that the number of farm employees must necessarily be less and in keeping with this their wages must be greater. If, then, in the item of small relative increase in the price of the farm products to the farmer and an increased cost of production, we find yet more potent reasons for the desertion of the farm by the rural population of Ontario and of all the other older Provinces, absolutely or relatively, it is plain that Governments, leaders in commerce, every intelligent citizen must lend their energies to the solution of this of all problems, the greatest, since it lies at the very root and basis of our common prosperity, the happiness of our people, and the physical and moral health of the nation.

The several elements entering into the solution of the problem may be now readily comprehended and easily understood. As illustrated by statistics they are:

1st. Lessening the cost of agricultural production.

2nd. Preparing and conserving all products of the farm in the most perfect manner possible until they reach the consumer and for which the highest practical prices are paid to the producer.

3rd. The transportation of farm products as cheaply and as directly to the consumer as possible.

I. Dealing with the first element of the problem it is evident that it depends essentially upon the agriculturist himself and necessarily involves:

(a) Sufficient capital to purchase labor-saving machinery as in every up-to-date factory.

(b) Skilled men to handle and care for machinery and sufficient capital to employ such.

(c) Organized methods for setting laborers to work, which means business ability.

(d) Preparation of soil for an assured abundant crop, which means in most cases in Canada proper sub-soil tile drainage which demands both capital and labor (and well-applied tillage).

(e) Care in securing seeds of high producing varieties and of assured vitality,

which again involves intelligence and some capital.

(f) Equal care in harvesting each crop in turn and in storing it so as to maintain its highest market value. It will be apparent that nothing less than scientific knowledge and business training, applied to agriculture as to any other manufacturing or commercial concern, can serve to fill these essentials to success and which, indeed, involves education and knowledge of the widest range and most thorough character.

But the last item leads clearly to our second element in the problem, viz.:

II. Preparing and conserving all products as perfectly as possible, which means:

(a) Selection of crops, which long experience has shown different localities to be fitted for.

(b) A local supply of labor not only for efficient cultivation, but also to harvest each crop properly when mature. These points touch upon the problem constantly being illustrated by the statistics given. There must be a larger rural working population, which means for them some method whereby their labor will be constantly engaged profitably, which means more varied and intensive farming such as that supplied by gardening, greenhouse working, and the feeding of cattle and poultry in winter. All this means doubling the crops by increasing soil fertility and local wealth by the employment locally of more energy and labor.

(c) This means in regard to general prosperity the employment of methods for preserving meats, eggs, butter, and fruits after the manner best known to science that is by careful picking, preparing, packing, and preserving by cold or in other words adopting modern refrigeration methods, which more than any other means will enable the farmer to control the market price of his products instead of this being determined by the middleman, not a producer, in some city hundreds of miles distant from the place of production.

III. The transportation of farm products from the producer to the consumer at the lowest cost possible, in keeping with the reasonable profits of the transporting method, whether wagon, railway, motor van or steamship.

It is apparent that in several of the elements indicated as essential to agricultural success, there would seem to exist an implied or necessary opposition between the interests of the producer and the middleman, be he peddler, railway company, or merchant; but to the extent that each of these is necessary to the economic and proper division of trade and handling of products this is not so. Of course, beyond this need there is necessarily a conflict. To make but one illustration one asks: "Is it necessary that a province be sub-divided into districts by the buyers for the great meat packing houses, who receive day by day from headquarters in some large city, instructions as to what the price of cattle, hogs, and other farm produce is to be, and is it necessary that they shall freeze out through the capital of these companies any individual drover or butcher who may dare enter any pre-empted field? Is it necessary to general prosperity that such companies get control by lease of city cattle markets and of the stock of competing abattoir companies and command not only the purchases in the field, but also the purchases in the stock yards, obtaining at the same time special privileges regarding cars at all the railway cattle yards of a district? And is it in the interests of general trade or of the producers or consumers who together number millions that three or more prices be added to most articles between the producer and the consumer? Surely it is time that capital and labor were combined in the interests of the agriculturist and the protection of the consumer. It may well be that a whole horde of commission men and small dealers, as middlemen might in the changed methods of co-operation in producing and trading as in England and elsewhere, prove unnecessary and a drag in the business field; but there is a certainty that the producer and consumer would each come into his own and more if the present non-producers would be forced to engage once more in that agriculture which has been abandoned, while capital and business experience would

be taken with them to their own and to the community's advantage as a whole.

In a word, we here are forced as citizens, as students of every social problem affecting the happiness and prosperity of the people as a whole, and as apostles of preventive medicine carried into every phase of life, to seriously ask ourselves and others: How long can a country, essentially a producer of raw material by virtue of geographical location and extent of territory still largely undeveloped, continue to develop normally and prosper, when it has shown a displacement of rural population during the last ten years to an extent so far as I can learn never witnessed before in the history of any people, and an increase of urban population rapid even beyond the palmiest days of United States immigration? Can we as intelligent Canadians view without alarm a situation where a population largely without capital, mostly of casual laborers, often of foreign tongue, and in ten years greater than the population of eight of our largest cities, has crowded into our urban centres living necessarily from day to day upon the ever-changing demands for day labor, forgetting that 1890 and 1907 may come again?

Are we, if we realize these facts and their meaning, to remain inactive, taking no organized steps to lessen this abnormal and insane urban influx by turning this mass of human energy back to the land, and if not to prevent at least to minimize inevitable disaster, where speculation and not production has seized hold of so many who cannot think along economic lines and who illustrate only the *carpe diem* of superficial Epicurean philosophy?

From nowhere better than the Canadian Public Health Association can such a warning be sounded, such methods be advanced, and such action be taken, since in a peculiar sense we have assumed a health and social guardianship of the people; while if we speak wisely we may properly expect that our teachings and advice will be heard.