

### Parliament Buildings of Canada.

The destruction by fire of the Parliament Buildings of Canada, although occurring at a time when the public mind was innured to tidings of disaster, yet caused a keen sense of national loss. This feeling was not, however, occasioned from a monetary standpoint, for the cost of restoring these buildings is but a matter of small moment to Canada, that is annually expending millions of dollars in public works. Its motives were far deeper; for the Parliament Buildings contemporary with the struggles for Confederation, seemed in the permanency of their structure and in the magnificence of their form to symbolize our national aspirations—And their destruction coming at a time when the very existence of the Empire seemed imperilled by an enemy whose intrepidity and resourcefulness appeared to know no bounds, would cause us immediately and without reflection to lay their loss against our common foe. Many, indeed, would shudder as the thought would flash across their minds, that perhaps the destruction of what we considered an enduring Canadian Monument, was but the harbinger of greater losses to follow.

The Parliament Buildings are so entwined with our national life that their destruction naturally moves us to various reflections on the growth and development of Canada. Those who planned their majestic proportions, were the same men, who realizing the advantages of union and co-operation laid the basis of our Confederation. The Parliament Buildings were the sensible expression of the ideals they had of the future greatness of Canada whose foundation they were laying truly and well by the very act of union. Their policy was a constructive one, union and co-operation its basic principles. Casting a retrospective glance over the half a century of the existence of the Canadian Confederation, in how many instances do we not see these principles violated through the selfish prejudice engendered by our party system, and

its consequent political exigencies. The common good has frequently been made subservient to party interests, and consequently our governments have been wasteful; our resources have not been husbanded, and our best interest have not been carefully studied and provided for. As an example of this we may point to the fact that we are paying vast sums of money to bring immigrants into the country, while the youth of the land are permitted to leave Canada and settle elsewhere, and no concerted effort has ever been made to induce them to remain at home. Our governments have not been paternal. Still we were in an excellent position to know which were the best methods to follow as our connections with the different countries of Europe would teach us where and how their people were best provided for and again the great republic to the south of us that had passed years ago through conditions similar to ours could tell us of failures and successes in the problems that confronted us.

No serious attempt was made at studying our various resources and educating our people how best to equip themselves to develop them. Now that our deficiencies are obvious, there is a frenzied attempt made to repair the injury done, but it lacks thoroughness, system and scientific knowledge and in many cases is but a sad failure rendering the public mind skeptical to the practical value to be derived from all efforts in this direction. Many who presume to instruct deal but in vague generalities, apparently unconscious that they are in the domain of empiricism and employing the syllogism, when it is only the correct data of experiment that has any practical value. We do not advocate that a government should do everything for a people and thus destroy all enterprise and initiative, but we hold that the relation of the government to the community is similar to that of a provident father towards his family.

Agriculture from the fact that it supplies the necessities of life must always remain a permanent institution in the world and a country will be independent when its natural resources furnish an ample field for



the agriculturist and its people continue to till the soil. In the older parts of Canada there is a marked decrease in the rural population, and this forebodes evil as it is this source which infuses new blood into the cities and furnishes a large percentage of the vigorous manhood of a country. This is what happened years ago in the New England states, and as there was no more surplus rural population to replenish the cities, the deficiency was made up by European immigration, and we are destined to witness the New England cities change their complexion of population with every century.

Our vital interests, therefore, point out to us the necessity of agricultural development according to the methods that scientific research has proved the best: But although one industry may be regarded as of primal importance, yet others must necessarily accompany it, and so mining, manufactures, trade and commerce must be fostered and encouraged. There must be more positive political action along social and economic lines.

Let us hope that as the Parliament Buildings will be rebuilt in a more enduring mould, so will the legislation enacted therein assume a more permanent character; that the best minds of the country will be employed in studying its interests and the results of their studies will find practical application in the government of the country.

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## Mexico.

The unsettled condition of Mexico is again engaging public attention. This does not mean that the country is in a more unsettled condition than it was during the last year, but as some of the infamous bandits have invaded American territory, the Mexican question has assumed new interest. Yet these bandits are but logically pursuing their original programme. They have been aided and abetted by the United States in revolting against legitimate authority and what more natural than, having exploited their own country, they should, pushing along the lines of