

Another Letter on Transients in Town

Northern Prospector Writes Again About How the Transients Should be Treated Here.

Last week The Advance published a letter from "Northern Prospector" in which he suggested plans for helping the transient unemployed. Here is another letter from the same writer:—The Editor, Porcupine Advance, Timmins, Ontario.

Dear Sir:—Regarding the suggested plan for aiding the unemployed that I submitted to The Advance last week, the only thing that I ask of you is to be fair in your criticism. For instance, if you are not in favour of my suggestion for relief of the unemployed there is no necessity for you to try to convey the wrong meaning for the whole letter.

1. You say that I want to add responsibility on the mines, which have already done their share for the unemployed. This is not in my letter to you.

2. You say that my plan is neither practical nor fair to the men. I do not question that you are entitled to your opinion, although there are men in camp who have handled labour for decades in this and in other mining countries, and they think vice-versa.

3. No one is asking the mines to raise wages.

4. You say that it is false sentiment to place the responsibility on the municipalities, when it is plainly to be seen that my suggestion means to relieve the municipalities. Of course if you mean that I try to burden the municipalities by my saying that a decent man should not be allowed to starve, I admit that I have said that, and I shall always uphold it.

5. You say that I should take a half-dozen unemployed and feed them five meals a day. I would not mind doing it if that was my share of it, but in a pinch I would feed all that my resources would permit, rather than let a man go hungry.

6. What do you mean by saying that so far as the responsibility for the unemployed is concerned, all the sentimental talk in the world will not place it at the door of either municipalities? The fact remains that such urgent responsibility is placed at the door of every community and every good citizen, whether we welcome it or not. For instance, if a citizen, on his way from his daily work and duty, sees a house on fire, would he not be expected to ring the fire alarm, rouse the neighbours, and also give his own help toward putting out the fire? The answer would be affirmative, that he is expected by all citizens to perform

these duties, which are his, not directly but indirectly, and ethically.

Why does this man, instead of going to his home as he had intended, rush to the rescue of the burning house, the people in it, the neighbours, the whole town which is in danger? The answer is that this man's virtues, such as common sense, human instincts, Christian spirit, would not allow him to pass danger unheeding. From this we can see there are causes for everything,—one causes the danger, another causes the remedy; one caused fire, another provided the man to aid in the extinguishing of it. If this man had rebuked his common sense and said: "This is the responsibility of the owner of the building and the fire brigade," and the fire had caused great damage to property and loss of life, whom would the people of the town blame, the owner of the building, the fire brigade, or the selfish man who willfully evaded the opportunity and responsibility of his common sense?

The same thing applies to the unemployed, and who should feed them. First of all, they should feed themselves, but for some reason of which I have neither knowledge nor the time to discuss it, they cannot do so. Well then, the Government should feed the transients. This is a puzzling question: why does not the Government feed them? The facts are that if a hungry man comes into the district and waits until the food is handed to him by the Provincial or Federal Governments, we will be sure of either one of two things,—the man will either be forced to starve to death and be done with it, or be demoralized perhaps to the criminal point and become a public charge forever.

The proverb says that the most worth-while deeds are those done in the proper way and in the proper time. Now The Advance maintains that the Government is responsible for the care of the unemployed, the transients, but most people realize that the Government is acting like the citizen who would pass a burning house unheeding. What are we going to do about it; act as though we were deaf and dumb?

—Northern Prospector.

Replying to the above The Advance would say that the letter last week was not misrepresented. It was published as written, and the criticism was fair if the language of the letter meant what it said. "Northern Prospector" for a man who sets out to criticize others appears specially sensitive to criticism himself, which is not an uncommon situation. If the proposal in the letter was what it purported to be then the suggestion was that the men at the mines here allow transients to take their work for part of the time. This would mean one of two things:—either the men now employed would have to work for less wages, or the

mines would have to pay more money. As most of the men now employed here do not feel that they have any margin of wages they can spare and continue to keep their families, and as the mines are not ready to pay more money for the same amount of work, the proposal of "Northern Prospector" is surely neither practical nor fair. As for "Northern Prospector" desiring to relieve the municipalities his last letter started out with criticism of the mayor of Timmins because the latter had planned to give transient unemployed here one meal per day. No one is any more anxious than "Northern Prospector" that men should be allowed to starve to death. That was the reason for supplying the meal per day. Men who had refused work were naturally barred even from the meal per day. The Advance repeats that the municipalities have no responsibility for the plight of the transients who have been warned for years not to crowd in here. Anything that Timmins may do for these transients is just so much kindness and generosity. "Northern Prospector" says he would not mind taking a half a dozen transients and feeding them if that were his share. That is the point. Timmins and Tisdale and the individual people of the two municipalities have already done more than their share. Neither of them can fairly be asked to do more. The reference to the burning house is beside the point. What "Northern Prospector" is asking the people of Timmins and Tisdale to do is to let their own houses burn down while they fight fire for strangers. The matter is not one of people starving to death. It is one of the municipalities assuming the responsibilities of others, when their own responsibilities are about all they can bear. Carry out "Northern Prospector's" logic that because the governments fail in their duty, the responsibility rests on the municipalities, is to beg the suggestion that if the municipalities are not doing their share then it is clearly the responsibility of "Northern Prospector." Surely he would not let men starve to death. By turning out his own family he could provide for quite a few transients. If he will stop to think over the matter, that is really the sort of thing he is asking of the municipalities. He does not want to do more than his "share," so why ask more than the same from Tisdale or Timmins? Both these municipalities have spent a lot of money and are still spending it to see that the transients do not starve. Both Timmins and Tisdale have tried to look after their own, and if they have not done as well by their own as they would like, it has been because there have been so many others crowded upon them.

There was a very large attendance at the annual ratepayers' meeting on Wednesday of last week. Mr. F. Hepburn was elected as chairman and Mr. J. Andrews as secretary of the meeting. The various reports were read and passed on. For the election which followed for trustees Messrs M. Smith and F. C. Evans were appointed as scrutineers. Mr. E. Lightbody, of the Dome, was elected for the ensuing three years. Mr. J. Fell, chairman of the board, was the retiring trustee. He has been on the school board continuously since 1914. At that time his own boys were in the school but even when his own children were past school age his interest in the welfare of the children of the community never abated. Each child of the district and each teacher of the staff were to him a personal interest for which he gave his time and thought unstintedly. He had high ideals for the comfort and betterment of both. If in the judgment of some he ever erred, it was with the view of giving more opportunities to the pupils and more comforts to those employed to look after them. An extensive reader, he kept in touch with the educational views of the various parts of the world and ever wanted the school which he represented, to be in step with those in the foremost ranks. The teachers who have come and gone and those who still remain will always remember him more as a real friend than merely as a trustee. The children who have grown to manhood and womanhood in the school while under his generalship will always think of him with a deep feeling of respect.

Miss L. Campbell, of Noranda, is the guest of her sister, Mrs. J. Haneberry. Mr. R. McWilliams, Jr., spent the week-end in Kirkland Lake. The Young People's Society of the United Church are renewing their meetings next week. The executive meets this week and an active interesting series of meetings is being planned under the guidance of President W. Andrews. These meetings are largely attended but there is still room and a welcome for any other young people who are interested. Master Harry McLean, of the Dome, is around again after having had the misfortune to break his collar-bone while skating on the Porcupine Lake over a week ago. Mr. H. P. DePencier, managing director of the Dome Mines, returned on New Year's Day from an extended trip abroad on business for his company. The Porcupine Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, held its installation ceremonies on Tuesday evening. Past District Deputy Grand Matron Mason of their own chapter was in charge, assisted by the District Deputy Grand Marshal, Sister Costain, of South Porcupine, who very ably did the strenuous ceremonial work of her position. The following officers were installed:—Worthy Matron, Sister Jennie Lang; Associate Matron, Sister Emma Wilson; Secretary, Sister Margaret McCaffery;

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Fogg left this week for a visit to Florida.

Modern New Store at South Porcupine

Opened Last Saturday by Consumers' Co-operative. Officers Installed at Eastern Star. Good Work of John Fell as School Trustee. Other South End and Dome News.

South Porcupine, Ont. Jan. 17th, 1932. Special to The Advance.

The Consumers' Co-operative Society an organization of Loyal Finns and others interested in co-operation, and organized to rescue the co-operative movement from political and other outside purposes and carry it on upon a purely co-operative basis, opened their new store in South Porcupine in the former Canadian General Electric building on Saturday, January 2nd. It is probably the most completely equipped and up-to-date store in town. Besides the large electric refrigerating plant, there is a refrigerating glassed-in show-counter for meats—the only one of its kind in South Porcupine. The store is under the management of Mr. Henry Koivisto, with Mr. A. Londry in charge of the meat department, and Mr. John Kivisto as clerk. There is a full stock of fresh groceries and the store is well-lighted, airy and roomy. To celebrate the opening of the business here a dance and reception was held in the I.O.O.F. hall on Saturday evening, which was free to all. The Melody King's orchestra supplied the music and a fine luncheon was served. During the evening Mr. J. Fell, Sr. gave a talk on co-operative selling to the English-speaking guests, while Mr. Koskela, of Timmins, spoke to the Finnish people.

The Ladies' Guild held their election of officers on Tuesday when the following were elected for the coming year:—president, Mrs. A. Londry; first vice-president, Mrs. J. Andrews; second vice-president, Mrs. E. Harrison; secretary, Mrs. L. Hussey; treasurer, Mrs. McDowell.

Her many friends in town will sincerely sympathize with Mrs. W. W. Wilson in the loss of her mother on Saturday, January 2nd. The late Mrs. Robert W. Ferguson was formerly a resident of Bracebridge but of late years has resided in Calgary. She was seventy-five years of age and her demise was the result of a fall from which she never recovered. Besides the husband, the following sons and daughters mourn her loss:—Mrs. W. W. Wilson, South Porcupine, Mrs. Shier, Calgary, Mrs. Iverson, Victoria, Miss Lillian of Los Angeles, Miss Clara at home, Joseph of Bracebridge, Will and T. H. of Ghost Pine Creek, Alberta, and A. J., of Calgary. Mrs. Wilson was on an extended visit to her parents' home in Calgary last summer.

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Treasurer, Sister Viola Brooks; Conduress, Sister Betty McInnis; Associate Conduress, Sister L. Armstrong; Adah, Sister Joan Huxley; Ruth, Sister O. Traver; Martha, Sister M. Andrew; Electa, Sister Ruby McCarthy; Marshal, Sister Ivy Cameron; Chaplain, Sister L. Grewcoe; Warden, Sister Nora Hall; Sentinel, Brother John Mason; Organist, Sister Huxley. The Worthy Patron, Associate Patron and Esther were not able to be present. The Past Worthy Matron, Sister Hall, was presented with the jewel of her office. Gifts were also made to the installing officers, Sisters Mason and Costain, the retiring Worthy Matron and to the incoming Worthy Matron. District Deputy Grand Matron Watt, also Worthy Matron, Sister Day, and a number of other sisters were present from Arbutus Chapter, Timmins. After the ceremonies of the evening were completed lunch was served. The various reports of committees given for the year during the evening showed the chapter to be in a quite satisfactory position and doing a full share of benevolent work.

Mean Thief at Sudbury Given Term in Prison

Sudbury has just had experience with a thief who seemed to be attempting to make a record for meanness and ingratitude. It is cases like this that wither up the generous impulses of many. Fortunately such cases are not very common. During the present depression not only have there been innumerable cases of the generosity of people who may be in more or less fortunate position and who show readiness to assist those less happily situated, but there have also been many instances where those who have been helped have shown their appreciation in such a way as to make the help a double blessing. Indeed, it is not too much to say that while the

hard times have given generous people a chance to show the kindness of their hearts, they have also allowed those who have been helped to also display the even greater virtue of accepting assistance in the proper spirit. There have been comparatively few cases after all where the people helped have displayed any meanness in response to assistance. The Sudbury case is one instance to the contrary. A man named John Curry, about 30 years of age, was befriended, clothed and fed and otherwise assisted by G. B. Wootton, of Sudbury. The kindness and help continued literally for months. Mr. Wootton certainly showed himself to be a kindly friend. As a sequel to all this Curry responded by stealing Mr. Wootton's automobile. He was caught, and when he came before the police magistrate at Sudbury on Monday of this week, Inspector Pyle related the details of the case and asked the magistrate not to show leniency in the case. The accused was sentenced to three months' indeterminate, and even worse than the prison terms should be the thought of the meanness that seems to be indicated by the action of the prisoner in this case.

EXPLOSION AT ROAD CAMP IN VICINITY OF COCHRANE

Last week one day two of the workers at one of the highway camps in the Cochrane district suffered slight injuries when a box containing dynamite detonators was accidentally placed on a fire around which some men were standing to warm themselves. The Cochrane Northland Post in referring to the accident says that there were three men in the group around the fire but only two of the men were injured and fortunately they escaped any very serious harm, though it was necessary to take them to the Lady Minto hospital at Cochrane for treatment. The man who placed the box on the fire was not injured and was able to keep on working. The Post does not explain how the man happened to make this sort of mistake, and the way he escaped injury while the two others were hurt is also passed without explanation. The Post adds that the two injured men are expected to be able to leave the hospital in a few days, and if the Post is right in this the men will be back at work again none the worse for the unusual accident by the time this appears in print. It may be added that the incident goes to prove that dynamite detonators should be treated with the greatest respect.

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Many friends in town will regret to hear that Mrs. F. W. Whitford and son, Billy, left here Wednesday of this week for her old home in Swansea, South Wales, being called home on account of the recent death of her mother, Mrs. Harris.

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