

THE EMIGRATION MISSION

OF

MR. JOSEPH ARCH

TO

CANADA.



"I say this to-night, that if I had not upon my shoulders the responsibility that I have in this country with regard to this movement, and if the farm-labourers of England will release me from my responsibility, I will take with me my wife and family and go to Canada—for it is a better land than England."—
Extract from the Speech of Joseph Arch at Leamington, 1st December, 1873.

By HENRY SIMPSON.

LIVERPOOL.

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JOSEPH ARCH'S CANADIAN EMIGRATION MISSION.

THERE is no necessity to introduce JOSEPH ARCH to those who will read this pamphlet; his name is indeed as "familiar in their mouths as household words." Some three years ago, it was known only to some select few, who were well convinced of the strong native energy and ability of the man, and who admired in him an instance of what a farm-labourer can do when animated by high and noble resolves. Mr. ARCH, as he has told us himself, was a farm-labourer in Warwickshire from his ninth to his forty-seventh year, but to-day he is courted by Ministers of State and great colonial dignitaries.

In the beginning of 1872 the National Agricultural Labourers' Union was formed. The object was to better the condition of the farm-labourers by means of a combination strong enough to insist upon their just demands. The Union had its natural head-quarters in Warwickshire, the home of JOSEPH ARCH, and its business is now conducted in Leamington. At the outset of the movement, the idea of its originators was that it would be possible, by means of transferring labour from the badly-paid districts to those in which higher wages prevailed, to ameliorate the condition of the farm-labourer. At this time they would not listen to a word on the subject of Emigration, although it was evident that only by a wholesale depletion of the English labour market could any permanent and important increase in the rate of wages be effected. But, as Mr. ARCH has said at Leamington, the labourers, as Englishmen, loved their country, and their leaders were unwilling to see the bone and sinew of the country transferred to other lands. This was a sentiment which did them the highest credit. But the logic of facts was quite irresistible. They found they could not effect their object by migration, and Emigration necessarily forced itself upon their attention.

For some time the matter was discussed at the meetings of the Union; and in August of this year, 1873, the deliberations took the practical form of a direction to Mr. JOSEPH ARCH to proceed to Canada, and to make himself acquainted with the condition and resources of the country as a field for emigrants of the farm-labourers' class. This direction or request expressed the wish of 80,000 members of the National Agricultural Labourers' Union, to say nothing of the hundreds of thousands of farm-labourers who, although they are not members of this particular Union, look upon JOSEPH ARCH as their natural and incorruptible representative in the eyes of the world.

On the 28th of August, 1873, Mr. JOSEPH ARCH, in company with Mr. ARTHUR CLAYDEN, a member of the Consultative Committee of

the Union, embarked on board the "Allan" Steamer "Caspian" for Quebec, and arrived there on Sunday the 7th September. No time was lost in getting to work. Mr. ARCH immediately waited upon Mr. LESAGE, the Minister of Agriculture and Public Works for the Province of Quebec, and had a satisfactory interview with that gentleman in reference to the encouragement to be given to immigration by his Government. Mr. ARCH also inspected the unrivalled Emigrants' Home, founded at Quebec by the Dominion Government, and placed under the able and efficient direction of Mr. LAWRENCE STAFFORD. On the 10th September, Mr. ARCH had an interview at the Citadel with Lord DUFFERIN, the Governor, a man of catholic sympathies and tastes—at once a scholar and a gentleman. In the evening, Mr. ARCH, in compliance with an invitation, dined with the GOVERNOR-GENERAL, and this brought to a conclusion his brief but satisfactory experiences of Quebec.

Provided with passes and credentials from the Quebec authorities, Mr. ARCH and his companion, Mr. CLAYDEN, left the city, and, as Mr. CLAYDEN has recorded, they were not permitted to be at any expense during the whole of their stay in the Dominion. Their mission was regarded as of high importance by the Government, and they were accordingly treated as persons travelling on business of public moment.

From Quebec they travelled along the line of the Grand Trunk Railway to Sherbrooke, in the eastern townships, and Mr. ARCH had here an opportunity of acquainting himself with the condition of agriculture in these parts. They paid visits to Stanstead and Scottstown, and taking leave of the Province of Quebec, made their way to Ottawa. There, as Mr. ARCH writing to his wife from Niagara Falls, states, he was invited to meet the Premier, Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD (since resigned), the Hon. J. H. POPE, Minister of Agriculture, and other Government officials. Negotiations and discussions took place which resulted in the proposition contained in a letter from Mr. POPE. From Ottawa Mr. ARCH proceeded to Toronto, the capital city of the great Province of Ontario, and there again he was received by the Financial Ministers, the Premier the Hon. OLIVER MOWAT, Q.C., and the Hon. ARCHIBALD MCKELLAR, Minister of Public Works.

Of course, being at Toronto, the temptation to visit the sublime Falls of Niagara was too great to be resisted. The district on the Canadian side of the Falls is acknowledged to be among the most beautiful in Canada, and it evidently created a great impression upon the mind of Mr. ARCH. He describes it with something amounting to enthusiasm in one of his letters.

On the last day of September, we find Mr. ARCH at Hamilton, a busy thriving town, the head-quarters of the Great Western Railway of Canada, and beautifully situated in the western corner of Lake Ontario. Here he had an opportunity of visiting, in company with the MAYOR, an agricultural show, which gave him an opportunity of estimating by its produce what farming is like in the Province of Ontario. On the 5th October, Mr. ARCH and

Mr. CLAYDEN set out on a visit to Huntsville, through the free grant lands of Muskoka, and Mr. ARCH's impressions will be found in the speech under the heading "Free Grants and Bush-Life." After, on their return, resting a day in Toronto, the party proceeded to Oshawa and Whitby, and afterwards to Paris, where Mr. ARCH had the happiness to meet some of his old Barford companions. The very interesting incidents of this visit Mr. ARCH has recounted, and they will be found in the speech under the headings "Plenty in the Cottages," and "Overflowing Larders." From Paris a visit was paid to the farm of the Hon. GEORGE BROWN, proprietor of the *Toronto Globe*, situate at Bow Park. This farm is acknowledged to be as nearly as possible a model of the best form of Canadian farming. From thence they proceeded to London, where, on the Sunday evening, Mr. ARCH preached at the Primitive Methodist Chapel, and on Monday explored the county for twenty-five miles round to see the farms and farmers. We find the party again at Toronto on the 21st October, and, a few days afterwards, once more at Ottawa, where the final conferences with the Dominion Government took place. On the 18th November Mr. ARCH arrived in Liverpool, and at once put himself in communication with the National Agricultural Labourers' Union, and on the 1st of December a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Union was held in Leamington.

After the transaction of the customary routine business, Mr. ARCH proceeded, amidst the applause of the meeting, to deliver his report. He submitted two official letters—one from the Hon. J. H. POPE, head of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa, and the other from the Hon. Mr. McKELLAR, chief of the Department of Public Works, Ontario. The first contained expressions of interest in the movement, and an undertaking that everything which could be done by the Government to facilitate the work of emigration on a large scale would be carefully borne in mind. In the second letter, the writer stated that the Government had had under consideration the proposal of Mr. ARCH that cottages should be erected by the Government, and about five acres of land cleared—the cost to be repaid by the emigrants in easy instalments; and that it was their intention, as soon as possible, to apply to the purposes named what remained of the sum which the Legislature had already appropriated for this purpose.

THE GREAT EMIGRATION MEETING.

In the evening a crowded public meeting was held in the Circus, Leamington, to hear an address from Mr. ARCH on the subject of his travels. The Rev. F. S. ATTENBOROUGH presided, and with him on the platform were Messrs. J. CAMPBELL, H. TAYLOR, R. W. COLLIER, EDWARDS-WOOD, BALL, ARTHUR CLAYDEN, J. E. M. VINCENT, E. RUSSELL, C. R. BURGIS, E. HAYNES, R. G. SWEETING, G. T. HAIGH, Canadian Emigration Agent, Liverpool, and W. G. WARD. The large building was densely packed in every part, and

about 4000 persons were present. Brief addresses were delivered by the CHAIRMAN, Mr. ARTHUR CLAYDEN, and Mr. J. CAMPBELL.

Mr. JOSEPH ARCH, on rising to address the meeting, was received with cheers, again and again renewed.

HIS REVIEW OF THE LABOURERS' MOVEMENT.

He said: I feel to-night that being called upon to address you on my visit to Canada, and upon the reasons why I went to that country, is a very great responsibility; and I hope you will bear with me if I should be somewhat slow in addressing you to-night. Now, I need not say here that in 1872 I commenced an agitation amongst the farm-labourers of England to better their condition in the land of their birth. I commenced that agitation, Mr. Chairman, from a pure and honest motive. (Applause.) As a farm-labourer myself, I had felt the iron pierce my soul which was piercing the souls of thousands of my countrymen. (Applause.) I wished to break no law; I wished to do nobody the slightest injustice; and, when this movement started, to prove to the English public that I did not want in any clandestine way to concoct any plans injurious to the interests of the farmers or landlords, or the country, I was very willing to receive into the Society as our advisers such men as the hon. gentleman who has last addressed you (Mr. J. C. CAMPBELL, J.P.), who is a landowner and farmer himself. I do not wish, gentlemen, for the clergy of the Church of England to think that I was set in hostility against them. We were willing to welcome to our advising committee any clergyman of the Church of England, or any Dissenting minister, who might come in, there and sit down and see how we did our business. What I believe, sir, to be just before the country and just before God is, that everything should be done openly and aboveboard. (Hear, hear, and applause.) Well, gentlemen, I won't detain you in going through a long series of details with regard to this agitation. By some I was applauded, by some I was condemned—(a voice, "The parsons")—but, allow me to say that not all the criticism of this country, nor the satire of our opponents, will ever drive me from the position that I hold; and I tell this audience, and I wish it to go to the British public, that not all the dinners that the GOVERNOR-GENERAL of Canada could give would ever buy me over—(applause)—from the great feeling which possesses my heart relative to the interests of my fellow working-men. (Applause.) Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, I may be allowed to go thus far into detail. We asked nothing exorbitant when we commenced this agitation. We framed no laws that were arbitrary.

THE LANDLORDS AND CLERGY.

Here I just wish to make this remark, that very recently a gentleman of the County of Warwick has dared to say that the landlords and the clergy of England have done their best to settle this question—"Take them out," and laughter)—and to show to the British public that the agitators were mischievous men. ("Shame.") Who, I ask, were the first men, when we had not a single cent in our funds, when we had only formed our

organisation but one month—who were the first men, with the iron hand of tyranny, that tried to crush it? Sir Charles MORDAUNT and Mr. HOLBEACH. (Hisses.) I speak names, gentlemen; I am not ashamed of my name, nor am I ashamed of anything I have done, or the way I have done it. (Applause.) And if the landlords and clergy of England will point out to me that I have done my country in one single instance a wrong, I will repent of that wrong. (Cheers.) But I maintain, sir, that when the British public are being deceived by statements like that, when facts prove the contrary, I shall most assuredly stand by the honour of this Union whether parsons or landlords like it or not.

THE BRAZILIAN FIASCO.

At the commencement of this movement, as my friends on the platform may know, I was one who could not see that emigration was the right thing. As a farm-labourer myself, I know that the lands of England are not more than half-tilled to-day—(hear, hear, and “Shame”)—and when I see hundreds of our broad acres not more than half-cultivated, it grieves me to feel that to lose the bone and sinew of our country, the tillers of the soil, is a loss which eventually our country will have to mourn over. (Hear, hear.) I opposed the system of emigration; and though the papers of this country said that I put my hand to those poor, unhappy emigrants who went to Brazil, I say I opposed that emigration—(applause, and a voice, “You did that”)—and allow me to say that I am just the same man now that I was on the 7th of February, 1872. (Cheers.) I fear no man’s frown; I court no man’s smiles; but I will have honesty, truth, and justice between man and man, whether it is between prince and prince, or beggar and beggar. (Applause.) The Brazilian emigration was thrown upon my shoulders, and the suffering of those poor emigrants have been charged upon me; and the Earl of CARNARVON, in the House of Lords, rose to ask a question concerning these poor emigrants who were “suffering in Brazil as the victims of that merely capricious man.” I want to know whether the Earl of CARNARVON will rise up in the House of Lords and ask what they are going to do with our British soldiers in the Ashantee war. (Applause.) If the climate of Brazil was ruinous to the constitution of our farm-labourers and their children, what are they going to say about our British soldiers—they have forced my own dear son up into that region—being placed where the air is so impure that they are expected to die like dogs as they travel along? (Shame.)

OPPOSITION TO HIS WORK.

I say, gentlemen, I love my country; but I love my countrymen better. (Applause.) The name of a country is nothing to me if she leaves her countrymen out in the cold. The name of a nation is nothing to me if she leaves her honest working-men to live upon starvation wages and die in the wards of the workhouse. (Cheers.) As time rolled on, our Union began to spread into the different counties of England. I did my best, wherever I attended meetings, to urge upon the men the strictest moderation—(hear, hear)—

and tried by all means within my power to keep them from any violence; and the colours of our Union flag have never been stained with a single act of violence. (Applause.) In parts of the Counties of Suffolk, Essex, and Cambridge, last Spring, what did they try to do? The farmers in these neighbourhoods combined together and locked out two thousand men—for what? Why, with the intention of smashing up the Union, silencing the voice of JOSEPH ARCH, and burying him and his work in oblivion. (“Shame,” and a voice, “Could not do it”—laughter.) I tell you, gentlemen, I felt that if ever in my life I had done a Christian act—if ever I felt in my life an increased feeling of pleasure fill my soul, it was when I went down to the district of Glemsford, in Suffolk, and saw workmen’s wives and their children with something to eat, and “God-blessing” the Union for it. (Applause.)

EMIGRATION AND THE OLD FLAG.

With such facts before my eyes, my feelings were roused to further action; and from that time I was determined, if that was the best grace our labourers could find at the hands of their employers—if that was the best usage they could get—much as I was opposed to emigration in the past, I would set on foot some system that would relieve these poor men from such tyranny and oppression. (Hear, hear.) I think that I showed myself a true-born Englishman by going to Canada. (Hear, hear.) I had many pressing invitations to go to the States before I went there, but as an Englishman I went to that land first where the British flag waves. And what did I find? There are Canadian gentlemen on the platform who are thoroughly conversant with its resources, and if I say anything wrong, I hope those gentlemen will correct me. (Hear, hear.) That country is some 3000 miles from our home, but about a fortnight will take us that immense distance. I no sooner landed upon those shores than I began to work for the interests of the agricultural labourers of England.

MR. ARCH IN QUEBEC, AND LORD DUFFERIN.

I did not go to mere speculating capitalists, to ask them how many men they wanted. I made my way to Mr. LESAGE, the Minister of Public Works at Quebec, and had an interview with him as an official. I laid my simple plan before him, and he fully indorsed my views, and gave me a pass to travel over the Canadian railways without cost to the Union. (Applause.) On the following morning, I received an invitation to dine with his Excellency the GOVERNOR-GENERAL. I accepted that invitation, and I think a more honest man, with views more simple and genuine, I never conversed with in my life. (Applause.) He heard what I had to say, and though some of the farmers of England would not so much as give me a single hearing, but would condemn me before they had heard me, his Excellency the GOVERNOR-GENERAL, who is the Queen’s representative there, gave me the right-hand of fellowship, and listened as attentively to what the representative of the farm labourers had to say as if I had been the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY. (Cheers; and, “He

know'd who he was talking to.") I stayed some two or three days round the neighbourhood of Quebec, and saw sights there which made me wish my brother labourers in England were enjoying the same privileges that I saw some enjoying there. In many parts of the eastern townships of the Province of Quebec, the land is occupied and cultivated by Frenchmen and French Canadians. I am one of those who believe that what is worth doing at all is worth doing well—(hear, hear)—and therefore I must honestly confess, as an English farm-labourer myself, I made bold to find fault with their system of farming. They did not feel in any way aggrieved at what I said; they rather laughed at me. (Laughter.)

HELP FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

Well, after having reviewed some of the eastern townships, I was told that the Western Province formed the garden of Canada. After I had looked through the Province of Quebec, I went into the Province of Ontario. As soon as I arrived in that Province, I had a letter from his Excellency the GOVERNOR to go to the various ministers and public men. I went to these gentlemen and laid my plans before them. In Canada I found a few old Tories—(laughter)—but I must say, for the honour of the different public men of Canada that I was introduced to, and with whom I had conversations, that a more business-like and a more honourable class of men, as business men and men of responsibility, I never met with. But my business was not to curry favour with officials; my mission was to do business with them, and when I laid my programme before them, they said they would consider the question, and let me know. I may tell you I have received two letters, one, which has already appeared in the *Labourers' Chronicle*, was from the Hon. Mr. POPE, Minister of Agriculture in the Dominion; the other, which I received last Thursday morning by post, was from the Hon. Mr. McKELLAR, chief of the Department of Public Works, Ontario. In these letters I have the fullest assurance that the Governments of Canada, both Provincial and Dominion, will do their utmost to facilitate the emigration of the farm-labourers to that country, and will pledge themselves that the members of our Union emigrating there shall be properly looked after and properly cared for. (Applause.) It is said that in the midst of counsellors there is wisdom, and I think, sir, if that be true, I ought to be all but infinitely wise. I have so many counsellors, behind and before, on the right hand and on the left, that, as the old story runs, I am sometimes like the donkey, who perished between two trusses of hay, because he did not know which was the best. (Laughter.) I hope I shall not perish among the much advice that I get. I am satisfied that the advice I get from such honourable gentlemen as sit upon our advising committee is genuine; and I must say that during the whole of our business sittings, which have continued now nearly two years, I have never heard a gentleman give any advice which has not been just, and honourable, and fair between man and man. (Cheers.) But amongst my advisers I find some who are very

anxious to caution me as to these farm-labourers going to Canada. Now, I want to know what was the reason why they did not anxiously advise me before I went out, and then it would have been some sort of information, perhaps, that would have enlightened my mind with regard to my business. But they let me go to Canada and come back, and then advise me what to do. (Laughter and applause.) So much for their judgment. But, having gone through these Provinces, I am prepared to state that what this country, Old England, refuses her farm-labourers, Canada offers them on the other side. (Applause.)

FREE GRANTS AND BUSH-LIFE.

Now, I will just very briefly give you my plans with regard to the free grants of land offered by the Government. There may have been some misunderstanding and some misconception with regard to these free grants of land. I am satisfied of this, that if any man goes out there thinking that, because he has got a thousand pounds or two in his pocket, he is going right out into the bush to make his way there, and have a lot of powdered-haired flunkeys to wait upon him, he will be terribly taken in. (Laughter and applause.) I visited, not only those towns that had been settled some thirty or forty years, but those districts which had been opened only about ten months. I was determined to see what bush-life was, and what a lumberer's shanty was. I have stripped to my shirt and chopped the trees; and I tell you that in sunny England—the land of the free, as they call it—I have suffered ten times more hardships in the rural woods than any Canadian suffers in his shanty in the pine forest. (Applause.) More than that, I have suffered that for 16s. and 17s. a-week for which a lumberer of Canada offered me 45s. (Hear, hear.) There have been men who emigrated from this country and gone into the bush, but they were not the men to go there.

THE PROPOSED PROVISION BY THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT.

The honest, industrious, hard-handed farm-labourer is just the boy to do it, and any English farm-labourer, when the Government have carried out their plans—which I am promised they will do directly—for aught I know, they may be already building shanties for Englishmen—who goes there will have a shanty, and a comfortable one; for I insisted that they should be built in a way by which chastity, virtue, and decency should be maintained. Perhaps you may say that is strong—what right had you to insist upon that? but I say that the mission on which I was sent out was not one of a frivolous nature and character. I wanted the prosperity of my fellow working-men to be enhanced. I wanted to see them on lands where their children could be well educated: I wanted to see the morals and virtues of these people cared for; but let me say that, if anything has given me greater pleasure than another, it was that in the remotest district I visited—which I may say was twenty miles beyond the confines of civilisation—I found the log-hut built by the workmen themselves, in which they assemble every night in

the week for their mental improvement and religious purposes, and where, on the Sabbath-day, three times they assemble to bow before the Throne of our Creator. (Applause.) Then, during the week these places were used as schools for their children. As an Englishman, I value the morality, the virtue, and the chastity of my family; and where I could not take my dear boys and girls I would not advise my fellow-labourer to go.

MR. ARCH'S DESIRE TO EMIGRATE TO CANADA.

But I say this to-night, that if I had not upon my shoulders the responsibility that I have in this country with regard to this movement, and if the farm-labourers of England will release me from my responsibility—(a voice, "Never")—I will take with me my wife and family and will go to Canada—for it is a better land than England. (Loud applause.) I am not come here to play the part of hypocrite. I did not go to Canada to play the part of hypocrite. Some of the papers have said I was "sold," that the GOVERNOR-GENERAL of Canada had bought me, and that I induced others to go where I would not go myself. But I say again, to-night, that if the farm-labourers will now release me from my responsibility, JOSEPH ARCH is the man that does not fear bush-life, but can wield his axe as well as any man, and he will go to Canada to-day. (Loud applause.)

COTTAGES, CLEARINGS, AND FREE GRANTS.

Now, fellow working-men, these are plain facts; they are simple statements. Next Spring, the Government of Canada will send over to our office the number of cottages they have got built, and the number of allotments they have got cleared. (A voice: "We shall be in two or three of them," and applause.) Now, I wish to be clear on this point. The Government is prepared to build a comfortable and decent log-hut for a man and his wife and family, to shelter him the moment he arrives. They will also clear from five to six acres, and they will find you the seed to plant it. The moment you get there, you may begin to put your spade in the soil. I will not tell you that every stump will be out; but I will tell you that on some of those stump lands I have seen some of the finest crops of corn growing I ever saw in my life. The Government, I repeat, will find you seed; they will find you from five to six acres of land ready for the deposit of that seed; and as soon as you have got your land, and at any time find your strong bony arms idle, the Government will take up every day, every hour, of your spare time, and will pay you the equivalent of five shillings a-day for working on the colonisation roads. (Applause.) If I have done my business rightly, or if I have done it wrongly, I now leave the British public to judge. (Applause.) More than what I have said—beyond that five or six acres of cleared land, you will have 100 acres given to you free, and the sooner you can clear that the better.

THE TIMBER QUESTION.

But here I would say, for the information of persons here, that if you think of going to settle upon these free-grant lands, and

cutting down every stick upon the land, it would be a mistake. I should like to see some of it left, and I will tell you why. I pointed out to the Government the imprudent conduct pursued with regard to cutting down timber. They have driven it so far away from the towns that it costs a large price to obtain it.

PROSPECTS OF HIRED LABOURERS.

Now, with regard to hired labour. I met with bodies of farmers who said they wanted English farm-labourers, if they would come out. I wanted to know what would be about the price they would give for the labour. They said they could not talk about that; but I replied, "You must tell me there or thereabouts." Some farmers told me candidly that if they could get good English farm-labourers that they could give them at the least twenty dollars a-month, or £1 a-week, besides their board; a good cottage to live in with their wives and families, rent free; all their fuel found for them; an acre of land attached to the cottage; and the run of a cow among the farmer's cows. ("We cannot get that in England," and applause.) I tell you, gentlemen, this is not mere theory. I went to a friend of mine, who sat beside me in Barford school, and he told me that every man had got his cow, and he took me to show me what a splendid cow his man had got. With regard to these allowances, what did I say to the Government? I said, Gentlemen, I would rather you would pay these men in hard cash, and let them sit round their own tables at home. (Applause.) I believe in family fraternity; and if there is anything that does my heart good, it is when I can sit at the table with my dear wife and family with a good joint of meat. (Loud applause.) For my part, I never saw a leg of mutton on my table since the day I was married.

ABUNDANT FOOD FOR LABOURERS.

But I saw plenty of joints in Canada, plenty of great lumps of beef in working-men's houses; and I do say, seriously, that it is the ambition and glory of every loving father, whether he works in a smock-frock or not, if he has a father's heart, nothing delights him more than to sit around his own table and cut the food for his own family. As an Englishman, then, it appeared to me that it would be better, in Canada, if the farmers were to pay the wages in full, and the farmers unanimously consented to the suggestion, and said they would rather pay good wages and let the men be in their own homes.

PLENTY IN THE COTTAGES.

Now for a few facts. I went into the City of Toronto and met one of our Union men who left Hertfordshire, and who landed in the month of May last—he, his wife, and his wife's sister. They all went to work, and I found that up to about the 2nd October, that the woman had sent her father—who was then on the parish at Hitchin—ten dollars to comfort him, and they had saved one hundred dollars into the bargain. (Applause.) I met, also, three of our poor Dorsetshire slaves. They are not slaves now. (Applause.) One of them, Charles Davis, because he had dared to join the Union and had got his wages raised from 10s. to 12s. a-week, was told

that he would have his allotment taken from him. He said, "I will go to Canada," and to Canada he went. He went to Paris, where some of my old schoolmates live to-day. How did I find him? Not the poor poverty-stricken man he was in Dorsetshire. He was at work upon the Great Western Railway of Canada, at 5s. a-day. He had got five cords of splendid firewood, all his own, to face the winter with.

OVERFLOWING LARDERS.

He had twenty bushels of prime potatoes that he had bought, and he had got them all in his cellar; for, mind you, they have got cellars in their log-huts. (Applause.) "Now, then," says he, "Joe, you come down to-night to our house, and spend an hour or two with me." I went down to his house, where he had with him his two fellow-labourers from Dorsetshire, who only went out last April. Since then, one of them has paid the fare for his wife and family to come out. I went into the house, and what did I see? I saw on the table a lump of roast-beef weighing about 16 lbs. (Long continued applause.) He said, "This is not all, Joe." "Well," I said, "let us see the whole." He took me into the pantry, and there hung a quarter of beef. Said he, "I gave five cents a-pound for it;" that was twopence-halfpenny. "Now," said he, "come here;" and he showed me a couple of pigs that he had given a dollar and a-quarter for (five shillings), which, I am satisfied, in the English market he must have given 24s. or 25s. for. "Now," said he, "that is all my own." It was clear that neither men nor women in Canada can starve, and that is only one of the scores of cases that I witnessed.

ALL THE DARK SIDE.

But now I must give you just a little about the dark side of what I saw. (Hear, hear.) You will bear in mind that I am not going to speak disparagingly of any particular district. I speak of things just as I found them. In the eastern townships there were three of our Union men who were not receiving the wages they expected to receive; but I must tell you that the men seemed in good spirits. I will tell you what they said. They said, "We are not paid as well here as up in the Western Province, but we do not mean to despair. We are in the country, and it is big enough to move about in." (Laughter.) They never talked that way in England, because they never had anything to move about with. (Laughter, and applause.) I happened to be with the man who engaged them, and I believe him to be a good man. "Now," said I, "how is it these men are not getting the wages they anticipated getting?" Well, of course there were several excuses, but I would not admit of any excuse. They wanted to make me believe ~~that~~ the English farm-labourer in Canada had to work for a few ~~months~~ on rather low wages in order to learn his business. I said, "Well, gentlemen, you are talking to one who was a farm-labourer from 9 to 47 years of age, and you tell me I have got to come to Canada and pay a certain premium for my apprenticeship at 47 years. I will not believe

it, and I will not have it." I went up to one of the farm-labourers and said, "Is this man a good labourer?" The reply was, "He is a very good labourer." "Then," I said, "pay him the full amount of his wages." (Applause.) I did not leave it there. I went down to the Ottawa Parliament, and laid the case of these men before the Minister of Agriculture. He wrote down to that neighbourhood, and the last time I saw him I was told that the men had got their rights. (Applause.) That was what I saw, and all I saw, of the dark side of the question, and that is not much to make a bother about. What is that compared to the dark side of the labourer's picture in England. What is to be said of poor GOOCH, the victim of the spleen of the farmers of Bedfordshire? and yet we are told by the great Leviathan the *Times*, that we can have justice if we like. (Applause.) There are some people, perhaps, who are anxious to settle this question, and to solve the problem of the English farm-labourers. If the landlords of this country would do as Sir JOHN PAKINGTON suggested, at a very early stage of this movement at the Worcestershire Chamber of Agriculture, it would solve the problem at once. But we are not content with Sir JOHN PAKINGTON making speeches to Chambers of Agriculture; we want him to put his sympathy into a practical form. (Applause.) He has the land, and we ask him to set the example. Now, I maintain this, that the problem to be solved is connected with the very strength of the farmers' position in this country; and I say that if our programme is not very speedily carried out, many of the farmers of England will do what the Chairman said they would—"weep for the crust they wasted in years gone by."

WHAT THE LABOURERS WANT.

Now, about our Union programme. We do not want to carry it out as it was carried out in my poor father's time—about 1838 and 1839—in the village of Barford. I can remember the circumstances, which happened when I was a boy. The men waited upon the Earl of WARWICK, and they wanted some land which they could plant with vegetables. They got the land; but how much was doled out?—Half-a-quarter of an acre, and for this they had to pay at the rate of £3 8s. 6d. an acre, while the farmer, on the other side of the hedge, paid only 30s. an acre. (Shame.) We must have some more honest process than that. I say, let the farm-labourer have from three to four acres of land to cultivate for himself and his family at the same price as the farmer. But I say also, give to the farmer, too, security for what he puts into his land. Members of Parliament have talked about what they believed would solve the problem, and the landlords talk about solving the problem. I say it would be a good thing. We want it done, and we want it done between this and next Spring. (Applause.) I do not want to see my fellow-labourers leave the country. I do not want to see the bone and sinew, which are to make this country rich and wealthy, leave us; but I say this, that if the farm-labourers of England are to be treated in the future as

they have been in the past, I would say to all honest, industrious, and willing to work: "Throw down your tools and go to the country which will give you wages, and give you land and opportunities of independence." Now, is there anything unfair, is there anything dishonest or unjust, in my request? I ask, would not the artisans in the towns be better off if the farm-labourers had got land to till? What is the reason why your vegetables come so scarce into the market? Because the land is held in large plots, and the farmers are too proud to cultivate vegetables on it. There is no class of the community which would not be the better by it, as well. It has been disputed as to the increase in the yield; but we have the case of land at Long Itchington yielding only fifteen bushels, which, now that a working-man has got it, yields sixteen bags. (Applause.) The landlords would be wise if they would do something to settle this question. They have done nothing yet; but we will agitate until they have done something—until by emigration the men have left the country, and the lands are left to till themselves. I thank you for your patient attention to what I have had to say, and now I will very soon sit down.

EMIGRANTS' HOMES IN CANADA.

The Chairman wishes me to say a word or two about the emigrants' homes in Canada. I must tell you that I visited every emigrant's home in every town I went into, and I say that everything that a humble working-man need wish while he is travelling through the country, was there for his comfort. I inquired very closely as to where they put the men, and where their wives and families. They said, "We put them in that room; there, we put the single young men; there, we put the single young females." And I say that, in the Dominion of Canada, they have in their emigrants' homes displayed the greatest caution and respect for the virtue and chastity of our farm-labourers' wives and families, when they get there. Now, I just want to say a word or two upon another point, and that is with regard to my plan of the labourer having some land to cultivate for himself.

TAXATION AND PAUPERISM.

There is a great deal said about the heavy taxation of the country. I see the Chambers of Agriculture are discussing about what they shall do with their poor paupers. Well, if I was a member of a Chamber, I should make a proposition that the men should have some land to till for themselves. A gentleman said to me the other day, "Why do you not teach these men to be provident?" "Why," I said, "do you talk like that. How can a man be provident who has not enough to live upon?" (Laughter.) What a monstrosity to ask a man to save when he does not get enough to find his family bread. Why, it is mocking us. (Applause.) What I say is this, "Put the men in a position to be provident, and if they are not provident, then blame them." (Applause and interruption.) I do not know whether the gentleman who is interrupting knows, that forty-three members left one of the Chambers of Agriculture last year,

and, if I am not mistaken, they were deficient in funds, and it is right to tell that gentleman that the Labourers' Union is not. Now, what I want to say in this country is this, that the farm-labourer, instead of being a forced burden upon the taxation of the country and on the pockets of the people, should be allowed to make his way for himself by being put in a position to do it. (Applause.) When a man has three or four acres of land, I ask how many of such men, when they come to the downhill of life, will become chargeable on the parish? How many will want to go to the parish doctor? Farm-labourers with three or four acres of land would scorn the action of becoming paupers. (Applause.) You would do the same as I did to the parish doctor when he came into my home and wanted to cut my children for the cow-pox. I quickly showed him the door. Let the labourer have three or four acres of land, and he will not be a pauper. I appeal to every honest son here, whether he would under these circumstances be summoned before the Board of Guardians to pay 1s. a-week for his poor father or mother in the Union Workhouse if he had three or four acres of land to cultivate. (No, no.) If my plan were carried out, you would not have 5 per cent. of the poor agricultural labourers' parents in the Union you have now. They would teach themselves to love them and to take care of them. Mr. ARCH concluded his speech with expressing the obligations of the Labourers' Union to the Trades Societies, and with this statement: "I tell my opponents that while I can raise my voice and there is a single link of slavery left upon any single agricultural labourer in England I will agitate this question until they are free."

The following resolution was then carried by acclamation:—"This meeting desires to congratulate Mr. ARCH on his mission to Canada; and, seeing that emigration has become a necessity to the labouring classes as a means of advancing their interest, this meeting is pleased to know that the Government of the Dominion of Canada is prepared to bring the matter to a practical issue by co-operating with the National Agricultural Labourers' Union."

Some discussion took place afterwards as to the winter in Canada, in the course of which Mr. ARCH said: "I tell you that I have seen men, my own school-fellows, who have been eighteen, nineteen, and twenty years in Canada, and they tell me that they like the winters of Canada better than the winters of England; and I say that any man with the will to work has no need to feel the winters of Canada more than those of England. I have not been in Canada during the winter, but I have been with truthful men, who have made the closest inquiries into the matter, and I am perfectly satisfied on the subject." (Applause.)
