

Let us now examine the effects of insurance on the unemployed who are not on the relief rolls.

If Mr. Bennett's Act had not been declared unconstitutional, at least 1.7 million wage earners would be covered by unemployment insurance on the basis of the 1931 Census.

According to the Bureau of Statistics, unemployment among wage earners was 15.1 per cent in 1938. It may further be assumed that again making use of British experience, 50 per cent of the unemployed would have qualified for benefits. Under these assumptions there would have been in Canada 128,000 recipients of insurance benefits in October 1938. Of that number 13,000 to 14,000 would be identical with relief recipients, while the remainder, about 115,000, would have lived upon their own resources if insurance did not exist. It is true that they would get their benefits in return for their previous contributions paid into the insurance fund, but employers and the Dominion would also have to make considerable payments as is the case in Great Britain. However, in contrast to that country a much smaller part of the total number of unemployed would be taken care of by the insurance fund owing to a

higher percentage of long term unemployment in Canada.

Let us then sum up. It must be clearly recognized that introduction of unemployment insurance will not be a solution of the present relief problem. It will no doubt be of considerable benefit for certain groups of industrial workers, especially those with favourable employment records. It will help them to keep up their standard of living during periods of short unemployment. It will preserve their purchasing power during that time and at the same time help to prevent too sudden a decline of prices. It will preserve the self respect of the unemployed by giving them a statutory right to benefits and not subjecting them to the degradation of a means test. But the persons enjoying these advantages will not be identical with those who at present and for a good many years to come are the rank and file of the people on relief. The sums paid into the insurance fund will not reduce the outlay for relief to any appreciable extent. The difficulties of the workers replaced by the machine, the problem of the young men and women who have never been gainfully employed, the tragedy of the older man who is not acceptable to the employer: they will be the same as they are at present.

Handicrafts in New Brunswick

By S. E. HAYES

LATE in 1937 the Department of Education of the Province of New Brunswick inaugurated a program of extension service and adult education under the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Scheme. Its purpose was to give practical training to young men and women between the ages of 16 and 30, who were unemployed and necessitous.

The program decided upon for young

women of rural New Brunswick embraced training in the field of handicrafts— weaving, clothing and related crafts and art education—the theory of design and color. This last subject was considered very important since the value of handwork depends not only upon its durability and technical value but upon its esthetic qualities as well. Today, fashions decree that the well-dressed person be clothed according to type, design and color suitable to the individual. The art training provides this requirement.

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The first move in developing a sound program of handicraft education was to train a number of leaders who could go to communities, equipped with the knowledge of the crafts to be taught. Graduates of Home Economics Schools and people experienced in craft work were enrolled in a three months leadership course. The course of instruction consisted of practical work in (1) weaving (2) clothing (3) art. Community activities, consisting of group singing, physical education, dramatics, folk dancing, etc. composed the evening program. All activities centered about one main objective, the community and a study of its needs. The study part was approached through the medium of study clubs. The entire class was divided into groups—each group selected a leader, whose duty it was to direct the study of some phase or problem of community life. Repeatedly the student body conducted panel discussions and general assemblies in order to acquaint all with the philosophy underlying the whole movement.

These trained leaders have an educational program to carry out—a program that has tremendous possibilities—economic, social and cultural. This is how they do it. Just as soon as a community indicates to the Province its desire for such training, certain organization work is done previous to the opening of the course. A class, averaging 20 in size, is enrolled. The course of instruction lasts one month. A hall or place of meeting is obtained and all physical factors such as heat, light, water supply, etc. are provided by the community. Any working equipment needed, that can be provided locally, is secured and in readiness for the opening date. Most important of all, perhaps, is the drawing up of an advisory committee—usually “key persons” of the community, who act as sponsors of the course, directing its activities during the training period and after the leaders leave to foster and nurture the development of the work.

Not many rural courses had been given when it seemed that we were losing sight of a very important phase of life—that being the health and nutrition of the group

concerned. Consequently, foods work was incorporated into the course of study. Enrollees study the fundamentals of balanced meals through practical work based on the preparation and service of dinners and suppers which they participate in as a group activity. It is now possible to visit courses in operation and find a group of young people baking the bread for the entire group—preparing a new type of fish dish—arranging the table service, computing the cost of the entire meal and announcing at the end of the week that the average cost of dinner per person is 6½c. In connection with our foods work there is an appalling need for more gardening and greater interests in our rural people producing more of their home food supplies. It is not difficult to discover among a group of 25 girls in a rural course that only 1 would have a garden in connection with her home. It is needless to add that the nutritional standards of such communities are discouragingly low.

It is exactly 2 years since the inception of the program of handicraft education in New Brunswick. What has been accomplished within this space of time?

Technically, 1,306 young unemployed women have enrolled in our courses—of these 604 specialized in weaving. All took training in art, in foods, in physical and health education and all belonged to study clubs for the purpose of discussing their economic and social problems.

Young men interested in carpentry have been taught how to build looms. Through these young men our demands for looms are being met locally and at the same time it is giving useful and remunerative work to a few. The credit unions have also been of valuable assistance in helping girls procure looms.

Educationally—The province, as a whole, has benefited greatly from the experience of group activities. Adult people gathered together in work and in play, discussing problems of a technical, a social and an economic nature are growing individuals—and promoting that growth is education in its highest sense. In the program of handiwork education just outlined, we in New Brunswick, hope to educate our

future home makers for the tremendous task that faces them. They are the custodians of the health and happiness of their families, obviously, they must be prepared for the role they are to play.

Culturally—Personalities are moulded under the mellowing influence of creative work. Finding an outlet for self-expression, be it in the fine arts, handicrafts, folk dancing or the art of living together makes civilized man a finer and a richer being. A new found self-confidence gives to the individual that inward feeling of tranquility in knowing "The Finer Things of Life". Enjoyable work is creative. It fosters good health, a tolerant attitude and tends to develop a better adjusted personality.

Economically—Wool produced on our farms, that may be sold for 15c. per lb. brings very little hope to the solution of an unbalanced budget but that same wool converted into a yard of New Brunswick tweed represents at least \$1.80 worth of saleable commodity. Families that previously had to depend upon what the market offered them for their wool—which at best was very little—may now clothe themselves in tweeds that are of superior quality and standard. In one of our enterprising counties, where agriculture is the basic industry and is taught as a separate subject in their County Vocational School, the graduating class had among its numbers 40 young ladies. They were dressed in New Brunswick tweeds and the cost of each outfit averaged \$2.50. It is hoped that next year's graduation exercises will find the young men as well as the young ladies smartly clothed in material produced and fabricated within their Vocational School. As this article goes to press, the author is informed that this year's class of homemakers is now weaving the material for their clothing needs. Very soon they will start weaving white cloth for the graduation outfits for both boys and girls. If we can do nothing more than stem the tide of cheap shoddy material, so often the result of sweat-shop labor, and replace it with material of quality and character—then, surely our efforts are well directed.

In New Brunswick groups of young

men are being taught to design and make furniture out of our native birch. The girls are weaving the upholstery for this furniture and draperies for the windows. By doing so, drab uninteresting homes may be converted into spots of beauty and refinement.

It must be made clear that the Department of Education does not direct all handicraft work done in the province of New Brunswick. The Department of Agriculture through its Women's Institutes, its girls clubs and through a few Youth Training centres has given prominence to the value and need of handwork. The re-establishment of weaving in New Brunswick was made comparatively easy because of the pioneer work done by the Mount Allison Handicraft Guild at Sackville, N. B. and also by the Charlotte County Cottage Crafts, under the direction of Miss Helen Mowatt of Saint Andrews. Besides the departmental programs, some private developments are active in rather unusual fields.

Pottery is a development that has won widespread fame. New Brunswick is fast becoming pottery conscious due to the untiring efforts of a young Danish couple who settled in the Southern part of the province within very recent years. After scientific investigation and years of research and study, these two artistic people succeeded in developing fine pottery from our native clay. Their glazes too are of their own composition and their original colors Autumn River Blue, Glen Green and Mountain Snow are characteristic of our natural color schemes.

Basketry is not a forgotten art among the Malicete Indians of our province. From strong ash and choke cherry wood baskets are made. In some cases native sweet grass is used along with wood colored with natural dyes. This adds a decorative note to the product. Other products made by our original inhabitants are oddly marked seal-skin moccasins, hand-wrought iron lamps and scones, pottery from our own clay and deep butternut salad bowls made from native woods. Weaving has been revived among the Indian women. The members of the Malicete Baseball Team are wearing

suits made from handwoven material. This specific accomplishment is a direct result of a Youth Training Course that was given near the Indian reservation area.

One of the striking features of rural handicraft courses is the magnificent co-operative spirit displayed by all. This spirit of support and assistance is manifested, not only by direct participants in the course but very definitely by persons who could derive no personal material benefit from them. All services offered are voluntary. It can be stated that, in general, the active support of the people grows steadily as they see for themselves the changes taking place in individuals, in groups and in the standard of community life. It is abundant proof that such schools, surrounded and supported by the life of the neighborhood, becomes a community group wherein students,

teachers, and adults live together. It is a type of training where right habits of thought and action are moulded and where a wholesome attitude towards life is created. It is done by actually *living* and *doing* worthwhile things in a worthwhile way.

It is my belief, that if country life is to reach its highest point of satisfaction, it will be found through a recovery of some of the values that have been lost in the transition from the old fashioned farm home to the modern farm where everything that is raised is standardized with the thought of selling it on the market. Grading, standardizing, and limiting production is perhaps essential for both producer and consumer, but some day it is hoped that every farmer and his family will come to realize that there are certain choice and rare things which they can have for themselves which no city person, whatever his wealth can secure.

Proportional Representation

A Voice From England

By T. E. HARVEY, M.P.

AT a time when the foundations of international life are being shaken by war it may seem an idle task to discuss the value of the application of proportional representation to the machinery of government. But if the principles of democracy are to continue and spread in influence it is of vital importance that democratic government should be conducted effectively and with regard to the considered opinion of all sections of the community. It is because proportional representation provides for this and other systems fail to do so that it is well to consider the need for its extension if democratic government is to survive the fiery ordeal

through which so many countries are now passing.

The system of election of representatives to a legislature or to local government authorities by means of a majority vote in single member constituencies is an imperfect and inadequate instrument for securing justice to minorities and not infrequently has resulted in gross misrepresentation. The grouping of constituencies so that each should return three, four, five, or more members, while each elector has one transferable vote, enables the elector to vote in order of preference for the various candidates and secures that no substantial minority will be utterly unrepresented. This method of securing proportional representation has been in practice successfully for about a generation in Tasmania, and in Eire

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