

## PROSPECTS OF IMMIGRATION.

Immigration, population and settlement are perhaps the most important matters of public policy for this country. It is desirable, first, to develop the resources of the country and its industries so as to provide employment for Canadians at home and to prevent the exodus of young men to the United States. But our undeveloped territory is so vast that the natural growth of the native population, even if all retained, would leave this a very sparsely settled country for many years. Hence the desirability of immigration for the purpose of settling the great fertile areas of the west. This settlement is of high importance from the point of view of the empire as well as of the nation. The more western Canada is settled the more it becomes a granary for the United Kingdom as well as for **Canada**, and the more it lessens the anxiety of British people at home about food supplies. It is not boasting, but speaking with perfect sobriety, to say that **Canada** possesses in every respect except population the status of a first-class power. With comparative ease she has obtained possession of a territory which would be regarded by France or Germany as a magnificent empire. It has been brought before the notice of the world recently by the discovery of gold in the Yukon; but as a matter of fact **Canada** possesses other resources far greater and more permanent than gold. She possesses in very large measure the things which enable people to live in health, comfort and independence: a healthful climate, abundance of wood, abundance of water, fertile soil, and such minerals as nickel, iron and coal, which become the foundations of great industries.

There is evidence that the flow of immigration toward **Canada** has fairly set in. The number of homestead entries made in the Regina office, according to *The Leader*, was 189 in 1895 and 173 in 1896. In 1898 the number was 302, and in 1899 it was 889. It is estimated that the sales of the Canadian Pacific Land Department for the past year amount to \$2,000,000. The volume of business is 100 per cent. more than in 1897. Some people are nervous about the number of Galicians and Doukhobors who have entered the country, fearing that they will form themselves into close communities, and that by their ignorance of our language and institutions they will become a dangerous or at least an obstructive element. The danger has been exaggerated for political purposes, and, in fact, it may almost be said to have no real existence. The number of **foreigners** is very small in comparison with the total population; and a man is not necessarily deficient in morals or intellect because he does not happen to have been born in the British Islands. In some cases tyranny may have caused a certain amount of ignorance and superstition, or a certain disposition to submit to injustice, but it is wonderful how quickly these drawbacks disappear under the influence of free institutions, plenty of land, education and opportunities for advancement. The general account of the Doukhobors is that they are eager for education, and it would be a patriotic work to give them facilities for acquiring a knowledge of our language and our institutions. No doubt it would be advantageous to have a larger number of settlers from Great Britain and the United States, who are acquainted with our language and ways of living. This will come in good time. As the United States become more and more thickly populated the overflow will naturally find its way toward Canada. The *Winnipeg Free Press* said recently:—

"A statement made up by the Immigration Agent for North Alberta shows that out of 3,200 settlers for the calendar year 1899 who went into that district 1,370 were from the United States alone. These English-speaking immigrants formed by far the largest item in the total. During the same year, the twelve months ending December 31 last, there were sent from the State of Minnesota 1,061 immigrants to the Canadian northwest, who took with them 111 carloads of effects, which, including cash, amounted in value to \$650,000. These settlers were located in various localities, namely, Lake Dauphin, Winnipegosis, Swan River and vicinity, Minnedosa, Ochre River and Virden in Manitoba, Yorkton and Alameda in Assinibota, Prince Albert, Rosthern and Hague in Saskatchewan, and at almost every town along the line of railroad between Calgary and Edmonton. Minnesota, although so near to us, is practically a new field that is being worked in the interest of settlement. These results are very creditable to the efforts of Mr. Benjamin Davies, who has charge of the Canadian Government Agency at St. Paul, and who reports that the indications for the coming season point to a very large increase of immigration to Manitoba and the Territories."

There is no disposition to underrate the importance of immigration from British sources. In the last two years the attention of Englishmen and their neighbors at home has been directed to **Canada** in various ways, and the natural result will be an increase in the volume of migration from that source. There is probably not a better field for British labor or for British capital in the world than the Dominion of Canada, and the more quickly that fact is recognized the better for Canada and for the empire.