

gration he decries that which makes the workshops of Montreal and Toronto as busy as they are. Of course there will be some unsuitables among the number of arrivals. The authorities do well to exercise as much care as possible in refusing admittance to those who are liable to become a burden. It would be the height of folly to become discouraged in the great work of colonization because a few undesirables slip in amongst the others. It was frequently stated in these columns during the years when the immigration figures were so unsatisfactory and discouraging that an indispensable condition of national well-being in this Dominion was the settlement of our empty lands. Now that that condition is being fulfilled we have the croakers and grumblers anticipating great evils and predicting disaster.

IMMIGRATION THEN AND NOW.

Not many years ago we were looking blankly at each other because immigration was distressingly slow. Now that it is flowing with a very full tide we are beginning to get finical and critical, and to wear a rather frowning aspect towards the agencies which have brought it about. A glance through the current report of the Department of the Interior conveys ideas of rushing prosperity and general well-being in the West. A sentence here and there from the reports of the Government land agents at different points is worth excerpting in proof of this. The agent at Alameda says:—"So great has been the demand for homesteads that it was found necessary last year to survey a number of townships west of the Soo line, and homesteads are now being taken up as far west as Willow Bunch." At Battleford:—"Ever since the opening of spring large numbers of settlers have been daily passing on the way to their homesteads. . . . The prosperity reported last year still continues." At Brandon:—"The prosperity of the country is steadily increasing, and this will be one of the best years the country has experienced." At Dauphin:—"Settlers have come to us in large numbers as homesteaders, as well as buyers of wild and improved lands, many transactions in sales having been carried through, some at high values, \$10,000 having been paid for a half-section some three miles from Dauphin." At Edmonton:—"The active and successful immigration work of the past few years should be continued for years to come. More surveys are required. The great Peace River country and the Mackenzie River basin will prove to be the 'second last West.'" At Lethbridge:—"Settlement is reaching out in every direction, and one of the requirements to complete the settlement in the West is more railways." At Minnedosa:—"A wave of prosperity is sweeping over the country, and many of the older settlers who bravely faced the trials and privations incident to the early settlement of the country are now reaping a rich and well-deserved reward." At Prince Albert:—"The bountiful harvest of last year, together with the high prices ruling for wheat, has had its effect, and this, together with the large influx of desirable settlers, and with the vast sums expended by the different railway systems in pushing lines through the country, have given an impetus to all branches of trade beyond the hopes of the most sanguine." At Red Deer:—"Since my last report this district has made prodigious progress in every respect. The influx of settlers has been largely in excess of any previous year."

And so it goes on down the chapter. Now compare this with the tale which the same agents had to tell ten years ago. Take the report of the agent at the land office last quoted, Red Deer, for the year 1890:—"I regret to have to state," he starts, "that the immigration into this district during the fourteen months ending to-day has been very small, much smaller even than that of the corresponding period embraced in my last annual report." His "last annual report," namely, that of 1895, was certainly not hilarious:—"I have the honor to report," he says, "that there has been a marked decline in immigration into the Red Deer district during the ten months of the departmental year just ended as compared with the corresponding period of the preceding year." With a very few exceptions this was the general story—decline instead of growth.

The whole history of the West teaches that immigration and prosperity are intimately connected not only in the West, but also in the East. The bustling times that prevail in these eastern Provinces are dependent to an enormous extent on the influx of immigration. When Mr. Bourassa, therefore, decries immi-