

## New World Ideas

Hon. C. W. Cross, Attorney-General of the Alberta Government, says that the completion of the railway into the heart of the Peace River District will have an effect similar to that of the forcing of the Dardanelles, as it will release thousands of bushels of grain. There is a great deal of grain which has been harvested and stored away, as it has not had an outlet up to this time. Hundreds of settlers are now leaving Edmonton for the great northern wheat fields.

The war has caused a certain decline of interest in **immigration** and the settlement of the West, but of course this is only temporary. The filling up of our vast prairies has only begun. Between Ontario and the Rocky Mountains there are three Provinces, each with an area greater than France or Germany, and together containing nearly 759,000 square miles. Notwithstanding the great **immigration** of the early years of this century, the population is only about a million and a half, or two persons to the square mile. A smaller area in Europe—France, Germany, and Austria-Hungary—contains one hundred and fifty-six million people, a hundred times as many as our prairie Provinces. It would surely be a very modest expectation that our country from the Red River to the Rockies will provide homes for fifty million human beings.

It would be easy to make estimates of the food-producing capabilities of this region which would be amazing, and yet would be well within the bounds of probability. But the fifty million people—that is the really fascinating vista—the ten million homes—the institutions, the play of public opinion, and human intercourse. In this new world we are sometimes accused of talking in a rather grandiose way. But the truth is that the possibilities of the new world have never been realized. What is true of the prairie Provinces is true of all Canada. What is true of Canada is true of Brazil and Argentina. The part of the American continent that is most thickly peopled is the United States, and it is thinly popu-

lated according to European or Asiatic standards. Even supposing, however, that the rest of the continent were only as densely peopled as the United States, there would be five hundred million people in America. We refer to this figure not as a mere matter of statistics. We are not glorifying square miles of territory or even saying that the significance of humanity is to be measured in hundreds or thousands or millions. But we do think that the vast importance of the new world, of America—we mean the continent, not the United States only—has never been thoroughly realized or recognized. We of the new world have been richly dowered. A vast heritage has fallen to our lot through the work and daring of Columbus and all the explorers and pioneers who helped to make the continent a home for the human race. In Europe we have found an example and a warning. The greatest military power in Europe has proved itself incompetent to govern the world or to teach the world. Great Britain is saner than Germany, because Great Britain, with its world-wide associations, has to a certain extent freed itself from European traditions. The continents of America and Australasia are practically free from the influence of tradition. Hence they have immense opportunities of development and immense responsibilities.