

Department of the Interior—Annual Report.

A copy of the blue book containing the annual report of the Dominion Department of the Interior for the year 1892 reached THE COLONIST last month. This contains a statement of all the work done in the various branches of the Department during the year, much of which is of interest and value to Canada. It opens with the report of the Deputy Minister of the Interior and then takes up in Part 1, the reports on Dominion Lands; in Part 2, the reports on Dominion Lands Surveys; in Part 3, the reports on the Northwest Territories; in Part 4, a report on Keewatin; in Part 5, a report on Rocky Mountain parks; in Part 6, the reports on immigration; and in Part 7, a report on the Peace River and its territories.

Deputy Minister Burgess in his report outlines the whole of the work of the department for the year, giving a great deal of information about immigration, &c. In opening he says:—"The greater part of the business of this department, in all its ramifications, consisting, as it does, mainly of the survey of public lands, the introduction of settlers from other countries, and the placing of such settlers on homesteads, commences with opening of spring and closes with the setting in of winter. In order, therefore, that Parliament may have a fairly accurate idea of what has transpired during the season next preceding the session, it is absolutely necessary that this report should be brought down to the end of December." Mr. Burgess then goes on to show how difficult it is to get the matter in shape and through the printer's hands in the limited time which such arrangement leaves them. He notes two important changes affecting the department, one the transfer of the immigration and emigration from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of the Interior, and the other was the retirement of the Hon. Mr. Dewdney from the Ministry and the appointment of Mr. Daly to the vacancy. Mr. Burgess then goes on to say: "The subjects of immigration and the settlement of the public lands are naturally very closely allied. Apart from this, the tendency of immigration has of recent years been so largely in the direction of the immense and fertile agricultural areas of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories that the convenience of administration appeared to indicate the desirability of having both subjects under the control of the same department. I take this opportunity of saying for myself and the gentlemen who are associated with me under the Minister of the Interior, in the administration of the affairs of the Department, how deeply sensible we are of the great importance of the question, and of the enormous additional responsibility which has been placed upon us. I also take the opportunity of giving expression to our gratitude to Mr. John Lowe, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, for his generous readiness on all occasions to give us the benefit of his intimate knowledge and experience acquired during the many years this branch of the public business was under his personal supervision. It would be difficult to express in word the extent to which this disposition on the part of

Mr. Lowe has facilitated the satisfactory continuance of the work since it has been attached to the Department of the Interior."

In the reorganization of the immigration service, consequent upon the change, the first questions which presented themselves for consideration were: 1st. The continuance of the immigration agencies in the Eastern Provinces; 2nd. The continuance of the immigration agencies as such in Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia. 3rd. The continuance of the collection of immigration statistics. Mr. Burgess was instructed by Minister Dewdney when the change was decided upon to make a thorough study of the whole matter, with a view to determining the best manner of conducting the emigration work. The result of his investigation was that he recommended that the distributing agencies at Victoria and Vancouver, B.C., London, Hamilton, Toronto, Kingston, Prescott, Port Arthur and Ottawa in Ontario, and Sherbrooke, Quebec, be abolished. An Order-in-Council was passed shortly afterwards carrying this recommendation into effect. He also recommended that the immigration agencies in Manitoba and the Northwest, as such, be closed up and the business put into the hands of the Dominion lands agents, so that the settlers coming into the country would only have to deal with one set of officials, as it was thought that the work could easily be all accomplished through the land offices. As to the third subject—the collection of emigration statistics,—it was thought that the results obtained from the work were not of any great value or importance, and did not justify the somewhat heavy expenditure involved, so this work was dropped. It is expected that the savings in salaries alone in Canadian agencies, as a result of these changes will be about \$20,000.

Regarding the inspection of pauper children, Mr. Burgess says: "I think it may be of some consequence in this relation to publish the following extract from the report of the Local Government Board of London, England, for 1891-92 in reference to the pauper children emigrating to this country:—

"Since the issue of our last report we have received through the Colonial Office further reports made by immigration officers of the Canadian Department of Agriculture respecting visits made by them to the homes of children who were sent out to Canada by boards of guardians with our approval. These reports related to 479 such children, seven of whom could not, however, be traced by the immigration officers. We are glad to find that, with few exceptions, the reports are of a satisfactory nature. The children are reported to be generally contented and well cared for, and the greater number of their homes to be free from objection. Though in many cases reference is made to faults in the character, disposition or habits of the children, there appears to have been comparatively few instances where the foster parents have expressed an intention to part with them in consequence. The reports show that in some of the cases the children and their foster parents have become greatly attached to each other, and that in others the foster-parents take an unselfish and parental interest in the present and future welfare of the children committed to their keeping. There are somewhat fewer cases than formerly in which children are said to have been adopted; but it is apparent, both from the present and former reports, that the system of adoption does not,

in Canada, necessarily imply that the foster-parent accepts once for all the care of a child as his own. With regard to five homes only the reports are not favorable, and in two of these the children are stated to have been not well used and not well treated or sufficiently fed. The immigration officers have reported unfavorably upon the bodily or mental condition of eight of the children, and one of those children has been returned to England as insane. These reports show incidentally that for the most part children are placed out on the understanding that they will be boarded, clothed and educated until they attain the age of 15 years, after which time they are paid wages at the rate of \$3 or \$4 per month. They also show that the homes in Canada connected with the various emigration societies are of great assistance in connection with the welfare and supervision of children. Children who are dissatisfied, ill, or in unsatisfactory homes, appear to be frequently received back into these homes, whence they are again placed out, after having received further training or medical treatment as may be necessary.

"We have caused copies of the reports to be sent to the several boards of guardians responsible for the emigration of the children, and have requested fuller information as regards such cases as appeared to us to require explanation."

Of the immigration during the year 1892, this report says: "The immigration during the year 1892, has shown an increase which considering the influence exerted by the cholera epidemic, is very satisfactory. The collection of statistics of immigration having been discontinued throughout Canada, except at a few points, as already explained, the comparative tables hitherto published have, as a necessary consequence, been abandoned; but it may not be out of place to draw attention to the figures obtained from the agencies of the Department at Halifax, Quebec and Montreal. The arrivals at these three points were in round numbers 52,000. These people comprised 28,000 who declared their intention of settling in Canada, while the majority of the remainder were avowedly *en route* to the United States. Manitoba, the Northwest and British Columbia, claimed 12,000 for their share, and a very interesting check was established as regards this movement of immigrants by making a comparison between the number reported by the immigration agents and the tickets issued by the Canadian Pacific and the Grand Trunk Railway companies. The total number of "souls" bound for Manitoba, the Northwest and British Columbia during the six months of 1892 was 7,252, while the tickets issued for the same period by the two companies represent 5,408 adults. These tickets being for "adults," have to be converted into "souls" and this is done by adding one third to the number of tickets issued, which makes the total of "souls" 7,291. Then, again, the number passing Port Arthur was reported by the agent at that point as being 7,220. Taking into consideration the inevitable overlapping of returns at the beginning and ending of the term, the extremely close approximation of figures is remarkable, and must be considered a conclusive proof that the information obtained by the immigration agents is thoroughly correct. About 7,000 cabin passengers are included in the arrivals, but it has been found to be impossible, except as to a few landing at Halifax to ascertain their ultimate destinations with any degree of certainty.