

POPULATION SHIFTS WEST

Eastern Provinces Will Lose
Three Members and West
Gain Twelve.

Statistics of Growth—In 1871
Canadians Numbered 3,689,
257, of Whom Only 109,
475 Lived in Northwest.

Ottawa.—Publication of the results of the census of 1921 turns attention to the gradual shifting westward of what may be called the centre of gravity in respect of population and parliamentary representation in Canada. Ontario, with a population of 2,929,054 in 1921, is the home of almost exactly one-third of the people of the Dominion. In 1911, Ontario, with 2,523,274 people, boasted 85 per cent. of the inhabitants of Canada. Quebec—whose population determines the unit of representation in the House of Commons for the other provinces—with 2,003,232 people in 1921, represented almost 28 per cent. of the population of Canada. In 1921, with 2,249,987 people, Quebec's population is somewhat under 27 per cent. of the population of the Dominion. All the provinces except one have maintained a steady growth in population since Confederation. The one exception is the little eastern province of

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Prince Edward Island, from which there has been a pretty constant stream of emigration to western Canada for years. Prince Edward Island had 94,921 people in 1871, according to the census returns. Its population increased until in 1891 it had 109,076 dwellers within its area of 2,184 square miles. Since then its population has declined until today its people number 88,615, or five thousand less than in 1871. At that time Prince Edward Island was a population of 339,640 souls west of the Great Lakes out of 4,833,239 in all Canada. In 1901 there were 645,517 people in western Canada out of 5,971,515 in the Dominion.

In 1911 the western provinces and territories had 1,742,182 people, approximately 24 per cent. of the population of the Dominion, and according to the 1921 census, they have 2,490,592 inhabitants, or approximately 28 per cent. of Canada's total population. They will be represented after the next re-distribution of constituencies by sixty-nine members in the House of Commons.

Increase in the Dominion's population and the spread of settlement into new provinces has been reflected by increases in membership of the House of Commons and changes in the representation of the provinces. Under the next Representation of the People Act, the House of Commons will likely consist of 244 members, distributed as follows: Ontario, eighty-one; Quebec, sixty-five; Nova Scotia, fourteen; New Brunswick,

eleven; Prince Edward Island, four; Manitoba, seventeen; Saskatchewan, twenty-one; Alberta, sixteen; British Columbia, fourteen; Yukon, one. In the House of Commons which assembled immediately after Confederation there were 181 members, of whom eighty-two came from Ontario; sixty-five from Quebec, nineteen from Nova Scotia, fifteen from New Brunswick, Manitoba, entered the Confederation in 1871 and was accorded four members. British Columbia joined and was given six members. The membership of the House was thus 191 at the close of the first Parliament of Canada. The Representation Act based on the first decennial census, that of 1871, enlarged the House of Commons to 200 members, of whom eighty-eight were from Ontario, sixty-five from Quebec, twenty-one from Nova Scotia, sixteen from New Brunswick, four from Manitoba, and six from British Columbia. Prince Edward Island's entry into Confederation added another six members. The Representation Act of 1887 increased the House to 211 members by raising Ontario's representation to ninety-two and Manitoba's to five. In the same parliament the Northwest Territories were given four members and the Commons' membership rose to 215. A readjustment in 1892-3 reduced the House to 213. Nova Scotia's quota of representatives fell to twenty, New Brunswick's to fourteen, and Prince Edward Island's to five. Manitoba, however, was given seven seats, a gain of two. By the legislation of 1902 the House was fixed at 214 members. Ontario's representation dropped to eighty-six, Nova Scotia's to eighteen, New Brunswick's to thirteen, and Prince Edward Island's to four. Manitoba's quota of members, on the other hand, rose to ten, that of the Northwest Territories to ten, and British Columbia's to seven. The Yukon Territory, too, was given a member for itself.

Change in Representation.

The Representation Act of 1906 increased the House to 221 members and took cognizance of the organization of the new provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. The House of Commons was constituted as follows: Ontario, eighty-six; Quebec, sixty-five; Nova Scotia, eighteen; New Brunswick, thirteen; Prince Edward Island, four; Manitoba, ten; Saskatchewan, ten; Alberta, seven; British Columbia, seven; Yukon, one. The redistribution of 1914 brought another reduction in the representation of the eastern provinces and increases in the west. Ontario was given eighty-two seats; Quebec, sixty-five; Nova Scotia, sixteen; New Brunswick, eleven; Manitoba, fifteen; Saskatchewan, sixteen; Alberta, twelve; British Columbia, thirteen; Yukon, one. Prince Edward Island would have had only three members, but legislation was passed providing that the representation of a province in the commons should not fall below its representation in the senate. Prince Edward Island thus retained four members in the commons and the membership of the house stood in the last parliament at 235. Another redistribution must now be made. By it the representation of the eastern provinces in the House of Commons will likely be reduced by three members, while that of the four western provinces will be increased by a dozen.

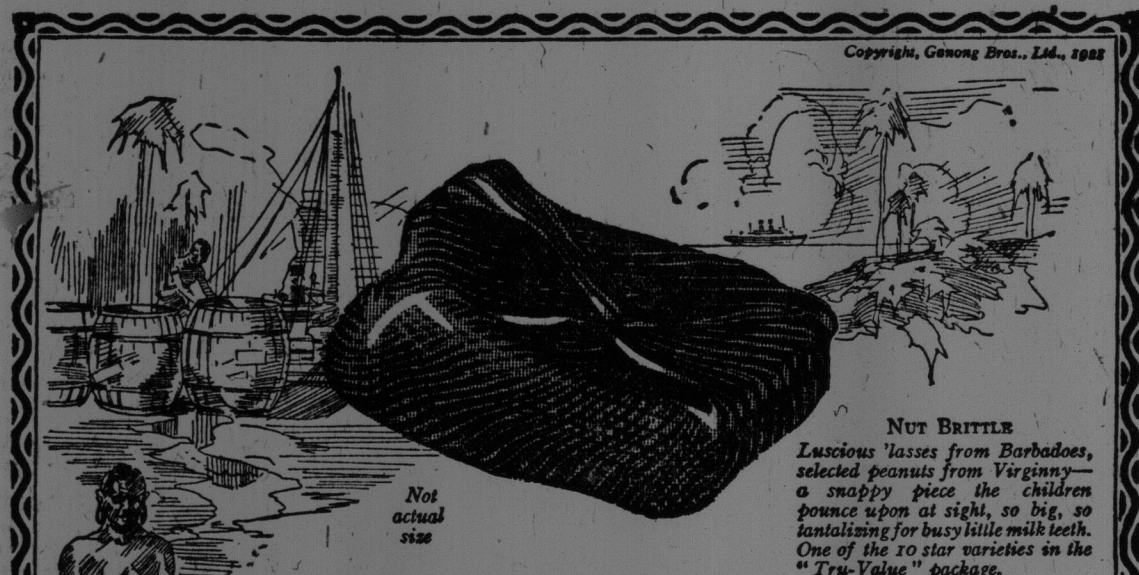
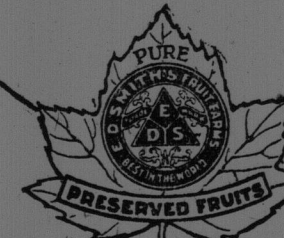
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