

The Standard



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CANADIAN GROWTH AND IMMIGRATION.

A modest, but exceedingly suggestive and instructive volume, has been published by a western member of parliament on the most important public question now facing the people of this country. Mr. C. A. Magrath is the member and the subject is Immigration. The formal title of the book is "Canada's Growth and some Problems Affecting It." Mr. Magrath represents the riding called Medicine Hat, which is the southern and eastern corner of Alberta. He resides in Lethbridge. His personal knowledge of the western country and its people is large and thorough. Mr. Magrath, at the age of twenty, went into the west as a topographical surveyor. This was about 1880, before the Canadian Pacific Railway Company was organized. He was afterward manager of a land company, and carried out the first irrigation work that was undertaken in Canada. After two terms service in the northwest assembly, he was in 1908 returned for the newly constituted riding in which he resided. He is a Conservative, and though the district was considered doubtful, his personal strength was such that he received a substantial majority.

Mr. Magrath does not share the view of many western people that the first, last, and chief duty of the government is to rush people into this country. His whole treatise is a warning and a protest against indiscriminate immigration. Numbers do not appeal to him. He has no ambition to see Canada full of people of all sorts, and sees the danger in the extreme carelessness and generosity with which we not only offer homes and citizenship to all-comers, but even employ all kinds of methods to "push and pull" people into Canada who may be a source of weakness. It is pointed out by Mr. Magrath that we are receiving new citizens much faster in proportion to our native population than ever the United States did. During the last forty years the United States have received each year on the average, seven immigrants for each thousand of population. Canada is receiving four times as many. Mr. Magrath concludes that we are taking in about thirty new settlers each year for each thousand of our population. He does not say that the United States received all that could be absorbed, but points out that when the immigration thither was transferred from northern and western Europe to the southern and eastern part, the country became nervous and adopted stringent immigration rules. The present situation is that while Canada is spending large sums of money in procuring immigrants, and is not very stringent in respect to quality and capacity, the United States government is collecting two and a half millions a year in head tax on immigrants, and expending the money in careful and rigid inspection of immigration.

Speaking of the migration between Canada and the United States, Mr. Magrath, who lives in the province to which the northward movement is largely directed, observes that in 1908 the United States statistics showed a movement of 56,800 settlers from the United States to Canada, and of 58,826 from Canada to the United States. Canada spent \$250,000 to get these immigrants. The United States spent nothing. The United States authorities at the border turned back 2,890 persons who sought to enter Canada. Mr. Magrath says that no such inspection or winnowing of immigrants from the United States took place. While the immigration northward and southward was about equal, the United States had twice as many officers watching the border, to scrutinize the settlers and keep back the undesirable element. In Mr. Magrath's view there is equal need of watchfulness on the Canadian side, and while it is true that a splendid lot of farmers are coming into Canada from the west, the new comers are not all of that class. He foresees that when hard times strike the continent again there will probably be a northward movement of American settlers that will be of no value to this country. It is a little remarkable that while the Canadian government keeps fairly complete race statistics and other details of immigrants from the east, it gives no such returns of settlers from the south.

Mr. Magrath notes that the easy conditions which now confront settlers in the prairie country make the region attractive to people who would not have faced the conditions of early settlement in eastern Canada. A prairie settler is given land free and is permitted to farm in the most exhaustive way. He may crop every year, which according to Mr. Magrath is a kind of surface mining absolutely destructive of the property. He does not have to clear off timber, take out stumps, or go through the preliminary hardships of the settlers in older Canada. The country is well opened up with railways, and he escapes the privations and struggles of the pioneer western settlers. Those who occupied the land and made homes under old conditions could be trusted to maintain the physical and moral standard. The conditions of life bred hardy and sturdy families able to take care of themselves. Mr. Magrath recalls the fact that settlers in British America in the first half of the nineteenth century were not paid to come to this country. Their passage in a sailing vessel cost usually about six pounds sterling if they were furnished with provisions. If they boarded themselves they might pay three pounds. But they were asked to take provisions for at least a fifty days' voyage, and were advised that they might be seventy-five days at sea. On this side they had before them a journey by team to their forest home, and then a long and strenuous period of clearing stumps and breaking up land. The western pioneers had a long overland journey to Winnipeg, and thence a horse or ox trail for perhaps hundreds of miles to their homestead, with no immediate access to market, and no near source of supplies. A people who settle a country under such conditions do not need to be weeded out. They are of necessity a select people.

Such were the Canadian immigrants of earlier times. The original settlers were a still more perfectly chosen people. The colonists of old France were chosen with regard to their fitness for pioneer

life. Mr. Magrath says "Colbert took care to send to Canada none but men and women of robust physique and sound morals." He pointed out that the Catholic clergymen tried to keep the race pure and have encouraged early marriages. It has come about that 19,000 immigrants from France had increased in 1763 to 60,000, and these to the 2,500,000 French Canadians now found in Canada or the United States.

The Loyalist stock, which formed the basis of the English speaking population in a large part of Canada was from the nature of the case a picked colony. In fact they had been twice selected. Many of the ancestors of these and of the New England settlers to the eastern provinces who preceded them, had crossed the Atlantic and settled in America on a question of conscience. Their descendants again migrated into a new country on a question of principle. "But that day," says Mr. Magrath, "is past. The immigrant now comes not from conscience, but with a desire to benefit himself materially—a laudable desire, but one not quite so lofty. The long Atlantic voyage of early days with its intense hardships served, if I may say so, without appearing to speak harshly, to weed out the sickly and unfit, but that method of selection exists no longer."

Mr. Magrath finds some quiet entertainment in the report of immigration officials who seem to him to be more anxious to commend their political superiors than to offer valuable suggestions or desirable information. "One gentleman whom the minister promoted, refers to the minister's visit to London in 1907. * * * The minister gave him instructions to open some new offices in Great Britain and to transfer some existing ones from obscure upstairs rooms to others in more prominent locations on the ground floor." The grateful official thereupon puts it on record in the report published by the minister that "the result of this policy of the minister is abundantly manifested in the vast addition to the number and quality of emigrants leaving these shores for Canada." Mr. Magrath points out that in the same year there was an increase in immigration from that country to the United States without any such transfer of offices. The next year saw a falling off in the emigration to both countries, and the dutiful official discovered that the Canadian decrease was largely due to the minister's insistence on quality rather than on quantity.

It appears that the United States spend less money than we for immigration and service, yet they receive more immigrants without paying for them. They reject fourteen out of each thousand who seek to enter from all countries while Canada rejects only four. The Canadian immigration reports give much less detailed information than those of the United States, and while the American officers are continually making suggestions as to future regulations and present tendencies and developments, the Canadian reports are largely devoted to praise of the government policy, and arguments, mostly fallacious, to show that the present ministry is entitled to all the credit for the increased movement toward Canada.

Mr. Magrath says that the modern movement of farmers to Canada is simply due to the occupation of the available public lands in the west. No such general movement from the south could have taken place until the home supply of land was exhausted. The settlers did not come because they were dissatisfied with their own government, and desired a new citizenship. They came because they could not get land at home except at much higher prices, and could not obtain unexhausted soil at any price. Mr. Magrath does not see that the Laurier government has been bringing in settlers any faster than other ministries to make new farms in eastern Canada. He does not observe any great increase in the area of cultivation in these older districts. The movement to the rich, unoccupied prairie lands, all ready for crop, in the only country which has such land to offer, does not require government action to increase it. Mr. Magrath believes that there is much more need of regulation and of discrimination than of encouragement. This is a good deal for a western man and a representative of western interests to say.

In his conclusion the writer of this valuable book pleads for conservation of natural resources. He deprecates unguarded concessions of minerals, timber and water powers. He strongly advocates the education of western farmers in methods which will prevent the exhaustion of the soil. He asks for the publication of immigration statistics as well as returns of immigration. He advocates first of all the release of immigration matters from political patronage. Mr. Magrath would be well satisfied with the present superintendent of immigration if he had a free hand to go into the market and select his subordinates in a business way. The patronage committee ought to be abolished altogether from this field, which is the most important branch of the public service. Mr. Magrath would like to see a commission appointed to look into immigration matters. He wishes to have fresh intellect brought to bear on the whole question. He would like such a commission to "go out and look into the faces of the people whom we are bringing into this country and return and tell the people of Canada all about them."

GERMAIN STREET CHURCH.

The centennial celebration by the Germain Street Baptist Church is a significant event in the history of the city. This is the third church organization in St. John which has reached the age of a hundred years. Trinity church began with the Loyalists, and the Germain Street Methodist Society (now Queen's Square Church), had its centennial some years ago. All three of these early churches, together with the first established by the Presbyterians, whose centennial will be due before long, are associated with the same street.

There are only four or five Baptist churches in this province, and probably not a dozen in Canada, older than Germain street. The first one in this province, and in British America was established at Sackville. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that it was established in New England and transplanted to Sackville, as it was composed of a body of settlers who organized in their own country and came to this colony as a church. Many of these settlers did not remain. The troubles which ended in the war of the revolution disturbed and divided them. While it is doubted whether the church had a continuous existence as an organized body, it must be borne in mind that all religious societies in this period were subject to disturbance and periods of disorganization. This would probably happen to many churches now if they had no regular minister, but were dependent on occasional and uncertain visits of travelling preachers. "Bishop" Black, the founder of organized Methodism in British America, reports that he found on his return to some of his societies that they had become completely disorganized. As a matter of history the Sackville Baptists have a strong claim to seniority. Dr. Gates pointed out yesterday morning that the century covered by the history of Germain street Church has marked a great progress in the history of the denomination and in religious activity. It practically covers the whole period of Protestant missionary enterprise. In this work and all other spiritual movements, the Germain Street Baptists have had a worthy part. The congregation itself will close its first century with the church free from debt, which is itself a matter of congratulation.

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THE POET'S LAMENT.

A silver tongue, a brain afire,
These are the blessings that inspire
But few and far apart;
But down below are lesser things—
Burned with desire vain—
Denied by God the spirit wings
That free the soul from pain—
Poor common minds that grasp at
Which looms majestic near.
If but its essence might be caught
And bred with love and fear.
Alas, we long—we weak of tongue
And lost against the bars
And yet, our inborn thoughts are sung
Beyond the morning stars.

N. I. W.

GOOD STORIES

"Servant girls not only come high now but they are mighty particular about their work," said a woman who recently was obliged to find a new maid. "One girl who had advertised for a place asked me how many there were in the family. I told her four.
"Well," she said, "I don't usually work for more than two, but the work is harder in some families than others."
"My son goes to college and my daughter is at school, so that makes the work easier in the middle of the day."
"I'm afraid that I can't take the position," she replied. "It's too bad for I know that you are the right kind of people. I can tell by the way you speak, and then you send your son to college."

JOSH WISE SAYS:
"Philosophy is just one darn thing after another."

"Pa, what does 'skeptical mean'?"
"Well—er—did you ever see a man taking in the washing for fear of rain in spite of the weather prediction 'fair'?"—Buffalo Express.

Pa.—Did George get any nearer to proposing on his last visit?
Mamma.—I think he did, papa; he asked me if you were heavily insured.

Muggins.—Women have such queer ways of expressing themselves.
Buggins.—Such as?
Muggins.—Well, my wife was telling me about Miss Yellowleaf, and said she was a sight to behold, and in the very next breath said she wasn't fit to be seen.

"Why don't you get to work and settle these railroad questions?"
"I'm waiting," said the Senator.
"For what?"
"To see if some graduate won't write a commencement thesis on the subject."

The Old Reliable.
Come back to earth, the comet's gone,
You're still alive and well
And in a fair condition to
Say halloo was a sell.
But other sky things, billed to show
Are hardly so absurd,
For sure the moon will be eclipsed
On May the 23rd.
And though you may not see the show
For clouds may spoil the game,
The old, reliable eclipse
Will get there just the same.

THE EDITOR'S MAIL

To The Editor of The Standard:
Sir—I did not merely question the correctness of the list of distinguished graduates of King's University in the historical article in your paper; in effect I corrected some palpable errors in it, although I did it in the most kind and considerate terms I could command; and they were none the less errors because Mr. Owen instead of accepting the correction courteously and with thanks, thinks it inconsistent with literary propriety to in effect repeat and defend them. If he is right in contending that men who receive honorary degrees are "graduates in the commonly accepted sense" then General Williams graduated at Oxford, and he does injustice

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