

The new view as to the North is in general that half or three quarters of the disagreeable features of the North we believe in are imaginary and that a considerable part of the remainder can be dealt with. A hundred years ago our world seemed to be a large one with unbounded room for expansion. Nowadays with wireless, flying, caterpillar tractors and other devices, the world is becoming a small place and it is difficult to see in what direction we may expand. In fact, there seem to be only two areas - one the polar regions, and the other the tropics.

In the tropics the problem is in general to overcome bacterial diseases and other deterrents to health and comfort. We are conquering these diseases slowly and a considerable expansion of our civilization into the tropics will doubtless result. But the tropical lands are already densely inhabited by one sort or another of indigenous population. We can crowd into the tropics then only as a superior race to exploit the resource (and in some cases the inhabitants). In the North the situation is fundamentally different in that if there are resources they can be exploited without the necessary conquest of any further diseases and without the exploitations of a dense aboriginal population. The Eskimos and northern Indians in Canada, for instance, were never numerous and now they are fewer than ever, because of imported contagious diseases. In Greenland every Eskimo is already partly white and it will not be many years until the same may be said of every Eskimo in Alaska. A considerable number of Canadian Eskimos are still pure-blooded, but we can already see how they will disappear in a way similar to that of the Greenlanders and Alaskans. And if they do not disappear, we are committed to a policy of civilizing them, so that there is nothing to restrain us from developing the North if it appears to have potentialities.

The old view has many spokesmen, even among the present day explorers, but there are a few dissenting voices, even from the past. It is of great importance to Canada to determine the rights and the wrongs of the various arguments, for upon that determination should rest the policy of the Government, and the policy of corporations and individuals with regard to the development of fully half of Canada. If Canada conforms to the old view she can have no great future in terms of population or wealth, for wealth and population must depend mainly upon geographic conditions. On the other hand, if the new view is correct that the habitable area of Canada is greater than that of the United States, even should it prove that the northern half of Canada can never support half as many or a quarter as many people to the square mile as southern Manitoba or southern Ontario, the importance of northern Canada still remain colossal. It is true at present in the United States that most of the big cities are north of Mason and Dixie's line. It does not follow from this that the country south of the Mason and Dixon line is not tremendously valuable. It may prove that Canada will have across its middle some similar line so that the northern half of Canada may always be inferior in population to the south half, somewhat as the southern half of the United States is now