

Why Settlers Leave

In 1915, over 153,000 left Canada for United States---Economic reasons the basis.

Need of Agricultural Credit---The U.S.A. Farm Loan Act

By J. H. Haslam, Member Saskatchewan Commission on Rural Credit

According to the United States authorities, during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1914, Canada lost to the United States, 149,220 people. Those people had been residing in Canada and applied for admittance to take up their permanent residence in the United States. Of these 44,013 were returning United States citizens; Canadian citizens, 45,893, and of people other than Canadians there were 59,214. In the year ending June 30, 1915, there were 153,233 people left Canada and took up their permanent residence in the United States. Of these, 46,387 were United States citizens, 55,700 were Canadians, and 51,146 were other than Canadian. During the year ending June, 1916, the emigration was in very much larger volume. The total figures have not as yet been published, but for April, 1916, the figures were 14,040, including 8,220 Canadians and 3,462 Americans. When the figures for 1916 are published they will show a startling condition of affairs and that Canadian citizens are going to the United States in very much larger volume than ever before in the history of Canada. It is safe to say that during the last three years Canada has lost to the United States nearly half a million people.

The United States keeps a very strict account of all people entering that country for the purpose of taking up their permanent residence. Their statistics are admittedly the most accurate of any country in the world. They also keep tab on those settlers for several months afterwards. By applying to the proper authorities any person who has a legitimate reason for receiving the information can find the present residence of any person who has gone from Canada to the United States during the last twelve months. Sir Robert Borden pointed out in a speech he made in Parliament in 1911, the great accuracy with which these figures are kept.

On receiving a request to comment on this state of affairs, I made some inquiries. I find that the movement from the Maritime Provinces and the Province of Quebec is one that has been going on for many years. On account of the great prosperity in the New England States at the present time it has been particularly active during the last two years. I have no doubt that the War has stimulated the movement of the French-Canadian people from the Province of Quebec to the New England States. A large number of people, who had not very long ago been living in the cities of Western Canada, and came from Europe, have gone to work in Duluth and other north-western cities. The Scotch who formerly lived in Winnipeg have organized a Scottish Society in Duluth, which now has as large a membership. I am informed, as the Scottish Society in Winnipeg, of which these men were formerly members. This may be explained by the fact that the United States Steel Company have recently started an enormous smelting and iron works in Duluth, which requires a large amount of skilled and high-priced labor. A great many of these Scotchmen were ironworkers before coming to Canada.

Settlers Return to the States

There has, moreover, been a tremendous immigration to the United States from British Columbia. This is evidenced by the large number of people who have entered thru the Pacific ports. But this only explains part of the movement. There has unquestionably been a large number of people gone back to the United States who were formerly settled in Western Canada. I am personally acquainted with a large number of these. There are settlements in Montana which practically consist of people who formerly lived in Canada and I have endeavored to ascertain from them why they left Canada.

Now it must be remembered that few people come to Canada because of its desirability as a place of residence. On the other hand, very many well-to-do Canadians, when they acquire a competence and get past middle life, go to the United States and take up permanent residence. This, because of the severity of the winters in Canada. Then again, the cost of food and clothing is abnormally high in Western Canada, nor are social conditions such that any person would live here from choice. This was pointed out to me some years ago by the president of one of the large Canadian banks, who said one reason why the banks

have to get such a large price for their services to the community is on account of the fact that they have to pay their young men very much higher salaries than in the East or the United States, because of the high cost of living here and of the undesirability of the country as a place of residence. So that, before people will come to and remain permanently in Canada and adopt it as a home for themselves and their children, they must see that they are going to better their condition by so doing.

I have had much experience in connection with immigration of people into Canada from the United



A four-footed pitchfork on the Western front. Coming out of a dipping back and getting a case of this disease cleaned up.

States and I know that the attraction that brought them here was the expected rise in the price of farm lands. People sold their land in Nebraska and Iowa at from \$50 to \$100 an acre and bought land here within the last eight or ten years at from \$12 to \$20, expecting that with the wonderful fertility and productiveness of our soil there would be a rapid increase in its value. They now find their former land in Iowa and Nebraska has nearly doubled in value in the interim while their Canadian land has not increased in value, and with the improvements added will scarcely sell now at the price paid for it.

Reasons for Leaving Canada

It is unquestionably the case that the majority of people who left Canada and who have been settled here on farms, give economic conditions existing



Is good grain where these shears should be kept until well finished or carried over. Selling half fat grasses is a poor way of getting the best returns.

here as the principal reason they have gone back to the United States. I have no doubt, tho I have not inquired to the same extent, that this is the principal reason why we are losing so many of our own people as well. One farmer who left Canada

last autumn told me that he paid on an average twenty per cent. more for everything he bought in Canada than relatives of his who lived a hundred miles south of him in the United States. These people visited back and forth and compared their bills. He also stated that he received from ten to twenty per cent. less for everything he sold off the farm.

There has been complaint on account of the high cost of all services rendered to the farming community in particular, and there is no manner of doubt that the fact that the settler in the first few years of his stay in this country has to purchase nearly all his supplies and material on credit, tends to aggravate this condition of affairs. The inadequacy of markets for all products of the farm, excepting possibly cereal crops, is another reason given by many farmers why they are leaving the country. There has been a feeling that Western Canada is being exploited by the East. A very large number of farmers in Western Canada were very much disappointed when the opportunity to sell the products of their farms in the United States was denied them because of the result of the last general election. The immigration of farmers into Canada has practically ceased since then, except in districts where there were a large number of desirable free homesteads. Moreover, there is a great scarcity of farmers in the United States, and particularly of farm laborers. The States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa lost nearly ten per cent. of their farmers during the census period between 1900 and 1910. This condition of affairs, I am advised, is still continuing.

Keeping the Farmer on the Farm

Some years ago I discussed with the United States authorities the movement of American population into Canada. They said it was a sporadic movement, the same as took place to the different parts of the United States from time to time, and would not continue in any large volume. But what they were more concerned about was the tendency of the rural population to leave the farm. This, notwithstanding the great prosperity of the farmer and the high prices obtained for all his products. It has been one of the great efforts of the government of the United States for the last twenty years, to adopt measures to counteract this tendency. Everything that possibly can be done there is being done to make the lot of the farmer as easy as possible and to induce the young men and women to remain on the farms, and if possible to bring about a state of affairs which will enable capable settlers from Europe to acquire land and become permanent residents of the country. Every other country, excepting the United States, Canada and Great Britain has adopted a system of rural credit which makes it possible for the farmer to obtain money for carrying on his operations at as low a cost at least as that of any other business in the community.

For the past ten years there has been an agitation in the United States for a system of rural credit. This sentiment was incorporated in the planks of both political parties at the last presidential election. Immediately Mr. Wilson became president, a commission was formed, consisting of eight very able men, including two Congressmen, two Senators, Col. Harvey Jordan, secretary of the Cotton Planters' Association; Col. Harris Weinstock, an economist and philanthropist from the Pacific coast, who had much to do with the organization of the California Citrus Exchange, and who had previously travelled thru Australia and New Zealand investigating economic conditions there. Mr. Weinstock is a brother-in-law of David Lubin, American representative of the International Institute of Agriculture, in Rome, also President Butterfield of Massachusetts Agricultural College, and two or three others. In addition to this the American Commission was formed. Most of the States were represented on it. The United States government paid the expenses of this commission, which travelled thru all the countries of Europe, as well as Egypt and Algeria. Dr. Oliver and myself had the privilege of being associate members of the commission.

The report of this Commission is almost a classic. Continued on Page 12