



How the United States Farmer is coming into the Canadian West to help grow grain for the British Empire.

# THE WHEELS OF PROGRESS

*Retrospect of the Period 1900 to 1910 in Prosperous Canada*

ONCE during the development of the most progressive country the world had ever seen a man named Henry George wrote a book which he called "Progress and Poverty." The book was based upon the single tax idea and for a time was widely read. People have almost forgotten it now—the doctrine that the more a country progresses the more and more sharply come the lines of cleavage between the very rich and the extremely poor. In Canada we have not yet come to the stage in progress where poverty sticks out. Most of the poverty in Canada is imported. There was a time in the pioneer days when poverty was the main way. Most of our forefathers were cradled in penury. But they fought out of it and their descendants have come into a fat land which if not flowing with milk and honey has as fertile a tale for the average man as any other in the world. During the recent financial slump Canada suffered less than any other country and this in spite of the necessary importation of large blocks of capital from abroad.

Since the great pick-up in the beginning of this century or thereabouts this country has never known a real set-back. We have managed to proceed mainly on the principle that a year of plenty in natural products means a good year in the factories, the warehouses and the stores. We have not yet come to the merely financial stage which enables some men to "hog" the products of the land while the diligent many get the pinch. We are an agricultural, commercial and industrial people. It is to be hoped that for long we shall remain so. Financiers are easy to get. We have a few and some good ones. We do not expect them to grow too opulent at other people's expense. The fruits of industry and the wages of labour are the chief good of any nation.

Looking back over the past year and again over the first nine years of this developmental century, it is of interest to notice some of the signs of progress that are solid and sure and unmistakable; tokens that speak of thrift and of good management and a largely sane outlook on life. Mr. Byron Walker says in his recent presidential message that we are recovering from the slump if anything too rapidly; but of course no condition of things ever quite pleased Mr. Walker, who, however, is usually a sane constructive prophet and is well worth listening to when he speaks on behalf of the Bank of Commerce.

## The West as a Barometer.

Naturally in the few more or less random symptoms of progress observable in this country the West figures as a sort of barometer. We have become accustomed to looking to the West for the signs of the times because the West is rapidly becoming the chief production centre in raw materials and is shifting the centre of consumption towards Winnipeg. These two factors—production and consumption at home—determine very largely a country's prosperity. Markets abroad are a secondary consideration. Canada has her share of these. But in the development of local, national centres of consumption as well as

of areas of production must come the bulk of our progress.

Taking the two new provinces there are figures to show that the gain in population alone in twelve cities has been seventy per cent. in a period of three years and 284 per cent. in the past nine years.

### POPULATION OF TWELVE WESTERN CANADIAN CITIES.

	1901	1906	1909	Inc. 9 yrs. 1901-9 p.c.
Edmonton .....	2,626	11,167	25,000	852
Calgary .....	4,091	11,976	29,265	614
Lethbridge .....	2,072	2,313	10,000	382
Medicine Hat ....	1,570	3,020	5,000	218
Fernie .....	1,873	3,913	5,300	183
Moose Jaw .....	1,558	6,249	12,000	670
Prince Albert ....	1,785	3,005	7,000	292
Saskatoon .....	113	3,011	12,100	2565
Regina .....	2,249	6,169	13,500	500
Portage la Prairie.	3,901	5,106	7,000	76
Brandon .....	5,620	10,408	13,000	131
Winnipeg .....	42,340	90,153	130,000	207
Total 12 cities..	69,944	157,696	269,165	284

Nine years ago the number of information points listed by Bradstreets in the area represented by the two new provinces was seven hundred and nineteen. Last year the number had grown to 2,320. The number of traders and business houses listed by this firm in the beginning of the century was 5,389. First of January this year the number had grown to 17,810, which is an increase of two hundred per cent. The customs returns for the same period show an increase of seven hundred per cent., which is almost one hundred per cent. a year over the original showing.

Taking the province of Alberta alone the record for municipal development shows thirty-five villages created, fifteen towns established, and four cities incorporated since the inauguration ceremonies in 1905. The four new cities are Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Wetaskiwin and Strathcona, all of which are the newest of the new compared to Edmonton and Calgary, which were made cities just a little while ago and about the same time as Regina and Prince Albert.

In the period since provincial autonomy was established the old centres have come to be metropolises distributing goods and people over large areas. Calgary has its own territory and its hundred thousand club. Edmonton has a vastly larger area and expects to be to the new northwest as a point of distribution just what she was to the old fur post territory. Both these places have more than doubled population since the autonomy bill. Regina has a similar story second only in importance to the other two; but the capital of a province which has forged ahead to the premier place in wheat production, the yield for 1909 being over eighty million bushels, or quite two-thirds the entire production for the West. Saskatoon has become a flourishing railway centre and Moosejaw developed into a big trading point. It would take a book to trace the unprecedented

progress of the cities and towns throughout the West. Winnipeg alone has increased her population almost three hundred per cent. in nine years; the number now being 130,000. Brandon has retained her place as the second wheat city. Portage la Prairie has become the crossing place of three transcontinental lines. And scores of little settlements have sprung up along the lines of immigration much of it, in fact hundreds of thousands of it with many millions of dollars, from across the border line to the south.

What the West was in 1900 it is no longer. Vancouver has now a population of more than seventy thousand and is rapidly growing to be one of the great cities of Canada, in a class with Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg. Victoria has made large strides and Vancouver Island has developed at a phenomenal rate.

## Agriculture.

Agricultural prosperity so far as Canada is concerned is basic. The year 1909 was the greatest in this respect. The total value of the field crops is placed at \$533,000,000, or \$100,000,000 more than last year. This tremendous increase is indicative of the increase in the agricultural population and the increase in the acreage under cultivation. The value of the wheat production in 1909 was fifty millions greater than in 1908. The value of the oats produced was twenty-six millions greater than in 1908. The value of the barley increased four millions.

Nor has this growth been wholly in Western Canada. The increase is distributed over all the provinces, with the exception of Prince Edward Island, which shows a slight decrease. Nova Scotia's crops were worth two million dollars more than last year, New Brunswick's remained about the same, Quebec's increased ten millions, Ontario's fifteen millions, Manitoba's eight millions, Saskatchewan's sixty millions and Alberta's six millions. Saskatchewan takes first place.

## Railways.

Canadian railways have made tremendous progress during 1908. Most of the lines built during the year are located in Western Canada, where it is estimated that twenty-eight million dollars was expended on new work during the twelve months. The Grand Trunk Pacific is now running trains from Winnipeg to Edmonton and will shortly have nearly one hundred lines of tracks in operation west of the latter city. Early in the spring it will commence to operate trains between Winnipeg and Fort William.

The Canadian Pacific has added so many new lines that it is now said to be the largest railway system in the world. It is expected that its revenue this year will amount to one hundred millions of dollars, exceeding that of the Government of Canada.

The Canadian Northern is also growing very fast and has somewhere about five thousand miles in operation, one thousand miles under construction,

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