

to shovel out paupers, "but to remove from the minds of persons of all classes the notion that emigration to Canada is banishment and to cherish the idea that it is only a removal from a part of the British Empire, where there are more workmen than there is work to be performed, to another, a fertile, healthful and in every way delightful portion of the same Empire, where the contrary is the case." However, Lord Palmerston and Sir Robert Gore Booth, unlike the Earl, used the opportunity to clear out their holdings in County Sligo with ruthless dispatch.

By the 1830s the results of such sponsored immigration were more popular in Great Britain than in Canada: the citizens of Quebec protested when the shiploads of peasants brought cholera, and the immigration agent at St. John, New Brunswick, accused Gore Booth of "shovelling out the old and infirm" and said the displaced tenants dispatched by Lord Palmerston "wore the foulest rags and their children were stark naked."

In the last half of the nineteenth century North American immigration patterns began to change. The appeal of the New World was felt far beyond British shores, and immigrants who were not from the Empire and who did not speak English began moving in. Chinese gold rushers moved up from California to the new gold fields in British Columbia, and in 1881 the Canadian government gave the Onderdonk Construction Company permission to bring 17,000 coolies from South China to help build the new transcontinental railway.

Nineteenth-century Irish immigrants were often poor peasants, driven from home by rack-rent landlords. This old engraving idealized their condition.

In the 1870s and 1880s Hungarians, Swedes, Norwegians and Germans began to arrive in significant numbers; and in 1898 the government began sending immigration agents to continental Europe and the United States.

Many Canadians found the newcomers as threatening as earlier Canadians had found the displaced peasants from Ireland. The immigration acts of 1906 and 1910 set a new tone. Immigrants from the British Isles were welcomed; northern Europeans were preferred over southern ones; and immigrants from Asia were admitted only in extremely limited numbers. As one commentator said, "Immigrants from those countries and those states which are readily naturalized are preferred."

The assumption that "old" immigrants from Great Britain and northern Europe were more easily assimilated would prove to be untrue. The "old" immigrants would be the ones most likely to

Who Was What

The act of 1906 gave precise instructions on how to tell an eligible immigrant. An immigrant was "any steerage passenger or any 'work-a-way' on any vessel whether or not entered as a member of the crew; . . . any saloon, second class passenger or person who having been a member of the crew had ceased to be such, who upon inspection is not found to come within the class liable to exclusion from Canada; and any person who has previously resided in Canada, or who was a tourist merely passing through."

