

British and American as an alternative, besides the attractions of the other colonies, would have been worth his acceptance. That was, of course, inevitable; but the flower of their own youth had been for long leaving them by thousands for the States, and the census returns of Ontario, the most prosperous region of all, had dropped to that of a normal European country. Solid comfort abounded, but individual wealth was rare, which seemed, with the example of the United States confronting them, vexatiously anomalous to the materially patriotic Canadian, almost indeed a reproach. The country, sound as it was, had an outside reputation of being relatively poor and certainly of being slow-going. The Canadians themselves echoed the cry, while their young men showed their views, as I have said, by a steady migration to the States. The British capitalist thought lightly of the Dominion, not of its credit, which was above reproach, but of its scope as a profitable financial field. And this was all the harder as Canada seemed to possess every essential for rapid progress, including a vigorous people—equally capable as farmers, traders, or manufacturers. There was something the matter, but nobody quite knew what. It was in the very last years of the century that Canada 'found herself,' and commenced that new era of development which only to those who knew it before and after, fully reveals the breach which divides the Dominion of the nineteenth century from that of the twentieth.

The causes of this astonishing forward movement would provide material for a chapter. In brief, however, the Americans, who for nearly a century had looked on Canada commercially with good-natured contempt, discovered the North-West, a discovery stimulated by the virtual filling up, as the word there means, of their own West. They have come in since by the hundred thousand, ready-made Western farmers, with capital and experience. Concurrently, and no doubt half-consciously encouraged by the movement of such undoubted experts, and by a vigorous government