

in the wonder-land of myth and tradition. Canadian history seems to have its proper beginning in that vague atmosphere, coloured with adventure and romance, which surrounds the westward voyagings of the Northmen. Though nothing came of these Norse discoveries, they are interesting as the first recorded contact of our race with these lands which we now occupy. They are significant, because they were a direct result of that spirit of determined independence which dwells in our blood.

When Harold Harfager, in the ninth century, undertook to impose feudalism upon Norway, the Vikings turned westward their indignant prows, and found a harsh freedom in the commonwealths which they established in Iceland and the Faroes. But theirs were not a sky and soil to encourage indolent content, and ever further westward they pushed restlessly, till, about the year 986 A.D., the coast of Greenland was occupied by Eric the Red. Soon a strong Greenland colony flourished on the western shore, more hospitable than now, and extended itself northward as far as the seventy-fifth parallel. A Greenland colonist, Beorn by name, being caught in a north-east gale while on a coasting voyage, was swept far to the west and south, till he sighted unknown shores. His tale stirred up Leif Ericson, who presently set forth to explore these "New Lands," as they were called (1000 A.D.). The point at which he first touched this continent was probably the coast of Labrador, near Hamilton Inlet. This region, with its austere soil and sea-line, he named Stoneland. Thence sailing south he reached a friendlier shore, which he called Bushland. This, in all likelihood, was the eastern coast of Newfoundland, a region of high plateaus covered with thickets. Running westward across the Gulf he reached a pleasant country where the wild grapes grew, and called it therefore Vineland. Whether Vineland was Nova Scotia or the coast of Massachusetts Bay is a question much disputed among historians. Here he established a village called Leif's Booths; and here his brother Thorwald built him a new ship, on a headland which they called

The westward movement of the Northmen.

Leif the Lucky, son of Eric the Red, colonizes Vineland.