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Why Uncle Sam Has a New Problem



STATESMEN, and the United States government generally, are much concerned because of the emigration of many of our farmers to the Prairie Provinces of Canada. They reason that these farmers take with them horses, cattle, and good farm implements, to carry on their work and in many instances, several thousand dollars in money each, which they proceed to invest in land in the new country.

In 1909, when the papers announced that 90,000 Americans had gone to Canada to make new homes, their readers were astonished but predicted that said Americans would soon return to the good old U. S. During the year ending March, 1911, 121,451 emigrants went from the U. S. to Canada. The first eleven months in 1911 the number who emigrated was 125,399. Some few thousands do return but the number of those leaving us is increasing rapidly and steadily. Think of this stream of intelligent, wealth-producing farmers, the back bone, as it were, of our country who yearly are going to Canada, while aliens from Southern Europe, dirty and ignorant, are pouring into the already congested districts of our large cities. Is it any wonder that statesmen are taking steps to check this emigration and to induce our people to develop some of our own unused lands?

It is a fact that there are millions of acres in our West that are still open to entry. Nevada has some 28,000,000 acres alone. New Mexico, Oregon, California and Arizona also have several million acres each, and there are many other states with a smaller amount of government land.

Recently, the homestead laws were changed so as to offer more inducements to settlers. It used to require a residence of five years upon the land before the homesteader could acquire his title to it. Now only three years' residence is necessary and five months of each year the homesteader may be absent from his claim, earning money for his maintenance the other seven

Many private companies are also undertaking irrigation projects of various kinds, and are offering their tracts of land for sale to prospective buyers. The railroads offer low rates to homeseekers. The country is flooded with literature urging people to go every direction where land may be purchased. At the land shows, held in Chicago each year, various products of the different

each-year lands of the Middle West to go to a new country, under a foreign government, where we have always thought of the climate as being so severe and the country a huge waste?

Perhaps, if we carefully considered conditions both here and in the Canadian Prairie Provinces, we may understand the situation better. Improved land in Illinois, as we all know, sells in prices ranging from \$150 to \$300, and even higher, per acre. Rents range from five to eight dollars an acre and in Iowa the prices both of land and rent are not much lower. Now what chance, many people say, has a young man who has only his brain and brawn as his heritage, to buy and pay for a farm at such prices?

The American farmer differs from his neighbors of foreign extraction, in that he thinks he must clothe, house and educate his children as well as the wealthier people around him do. Many an Illinois renter finds that all he can do is to keep up in external appearances with his neighbors and to pay his rent. No wonder they seek a changed condition of things where there will be more of an incentive to work diligently. Ten and even five years ago there were thousands of acres of land in Saskatchewan and Alberta that could be secured free. The Canadian government only required three years' residence upon the land and then 160 acres of level or slightly rolling prairie covered with nutritious grasses, all ready for the breaking plow, would be theirs. The homesteaders put in wheat, oats, rye, potatoes and flax and when conditions were favorable, reaped astonishingly



A former Ill. farm hand and his bundles of oats raised on his own land near Gleichen, Alta. Note how profusely the oats are headed out.

months. Various reclamation projects are also under way. The government undertakes the work and furnishes the money to supply certain irrigable districts with water. Then the government sells the land all ready for irrigation at a nominal price to settlers. Millions of dollars are being expended on reclamation work by the U. S. and yet the work is only begun.

sections are shown and speakers and booklets vie with each other in telling of the opportunities here and there.

One would think that all this activity would keep the farmer within the bounds of the U. S. Most of the people who go to Canada are from Minn., the Dakotas, Ill., and Iowa. Why should the Illinois or Iowa farmer leave the fertile and sure-of-crop-