

the exports \$74,000,000, whereof \$57,000,000 were the produce of Canada. In 1880 the figures were \$86,500,000, \$88,000,000, and \$72,000,000 respectively. In 1890 they stood at \$121,850,000, \$96,750,000, and \$85,000,000; and in 1900 at \$189,000,000, \$191,800,000, and \$168,900,000. Not at all a bad showing, surely!

Now just one more comparison, and we shall have done with figures. Perhaps the best test of a nation's intellectual growth is the development of her postal system. Where letters multiply, and newspapers and periodicals become as thick as autumn leaves in Vallambrosa, there you may confidently look for an intelligent, enquiring, enterprising people. Let us see how it has been with Canada.

In 1870 she had 3,820 post-offices, through which passed 24,500,000 letters and 20,150,000 papers and periodicals. In 1880, 5,773 offices distributed 45,800,000 letters and 45,120,000 papers, etc. In 1890 the figures were 7,913, 94,100,000, and 70,980,000 respectively, and in 1900 they reached 9,627, 178,292,000, and 113,418,000.

It misses of being necessary to confess that any or all of these statistics may be made to look very small when put in comparison with the corresponding totals for the United States. We have no thought of presenting them with that object, but simply for the purpose of founding upon them the claim that a country which, despite an undeniably disappointing rate of increase in population, has accomplished such material, social, and intellectual progress, is perfectly competent to work out her own future in entire political independence of her gigantic neighbor.

A few words further, and we have done, not because we have exhausted our ammunition, but because we must not unduly prolong this fusillade. You have been pleased to show especial contempt towards our steel and iron enterprises. "The steel industry is a figment, and Cape Breton a mirage. It was ridiculous to compare anything that the Canadians could do with what was done by the United States with its 80,000,000 peo-

ple, and which was making more steel than the rest of the world."

Ne sutor ultra crepidam, the shoemaker should not venture to criticize anything save shoes, was a shrewd adage of the ancients, which in this instance at least you have followed, for it must be frankly admitted that as an authority upon steel you are in the words of the late lamented Artemus Ward, "ekalled by few, and exselled by none." But where did you get your notion that the future of Canada depended upon the development of her steel and iron industry? Verily you are barking up the wrong tree. Permit us to point out that the most important natural resource of the country is neither iron ore, nor coal, nor even the still almost illimitable forests, but "Manitoba hard." The remarkable movement of settlers across the international boundary *from south to north*, which is causing as much concern to the Republic as it is giving satisfaction to the Dominion, is not inspired by a desire for iron mines, but for wheat-growing lands.

The highest grade of wheat known to the world is that called "Manitoba hard," and with regard to it, Canada will ere long be mistress of the situation. The production of hard wheat is limited to Siberian Russia, to the two states of Dakota and Minnesota, and to our own Northwest. Now Siberia will not for a long time be a considerable producer; the hard wheat region of the United States is a mere bagatelle, and, therefore, the domination of the hard wheat industry of the world, and consequently of the food supply of the human race, will be in the hands of the Canadian farmer. Incomparably better than the iron and coal mines of the Pittsburg district, than the diamond diggings of South Africa, than the gold reefs of Australia, are those glorious plains which will soon swell in billows of golden grain from the Great Lakes to the Rockies, and which, perhaps, constitute in themselves the true reason of your statement that Canada's only chance of a future is to throw in her lot with the American Republic, for it is not what you really foresee, but what you ardently covet that inspired your prophecy.