

HOMESTEAD ENTRIES AND SALES.

The following is a comparative statement of the homestead entries and sales which have been made at the several agencies of the department during the departmental years—that is, the periods of twelve months ending with October—1893 and 1894, respectively:—

	1893.	1894.
Number of homestead entries.....	4,067	3,209
Acreage of homesteads.....	650,720	513,440
Sales, acreage of.....	46,873	17,578

For the calendar year 1894, the number of homestead entries was 3,174, covering an area of 507,840 acres. The sales during the same period were 18,275 acres. In this connection I think it right that reference should be made, in the same way as was done last year, to the reasons for the great decrease in the sales of land. This decrease does not mean that the business of the department has been correspondingly reduced in volume; it is simply due to the abolition of the pre-emption system, and to the policy which has been substituted of holding the public lands which have not been utilized as subsidies in aid of the construction of railways with which to open up the country for colonization and generally for the development of its resources, as free homesteads for actual settlers rather than as a source of revenue. The few sales that were made during the last season were made to actual settlers in lots not exceeding 160 acres, and only in cases where the applicant was able to show satisfactorily that the area applied for was necessary for the proper conduct of his agricultural operations.

IMMIGRANT ARRIVALS.

The whole number of arrivals of the immigrant class at the ports of Quebec, Halifax and Montreal, during the year 1894 was 27,911 as compared with 53,447 during the previous year. Of the 27,911 persons mentioned, 20,680 declared their intention of becoming residents of the Dominion of Canada, being over 8,000 less than for 1893; and 7,087 declared their intention of settling in Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia, a decrease of 4279. It will of course be remembered that the department has abandoned the plan of collecting statistics with regard to immigrant arrivals in the country generally. All that is done is to count the ocean arrivals, obtaining from each incomer a declaration as to whether he intends to remain permanently in the country or not and the province in which he proposes to reside.

The decrease in the figures mentioned is much greater in proportion than the decrease in the number of persons taking up homesteads as compared with the previous year, which proves that a larger proportion of the immigrants of last year than usual consisted of agricultural settlers.

NATIONALITIES OF HOMESTEAD SETTLERS.

I submit a statement showing the nationalities of the settlers taking up homesteads during the calendar year 1894 as compared with the previous year. A glance at this table will suffice to show that very nearly three-fourths of the entire falling off is to be traced to the decreased movement from the other provinces. There is a gratifying increase in the number of settlers coming from the United States, 850 entries having been made by them as compared with 818 in 1893.