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Development of Canadian Trade and Resources

CONCLUSIONS of the Dominions Royal Commission Resulting From Their
Canadian Tours—Too Large a Proportion of Our Exports Has Passed
Through United States Ports—Many Important Recommendations Made.

DESCRIBING Canada as "the greatest of Your Majesty's Oversea Possessions," the Dominions Royal Commission in its fifth interim report, summarizes the main points in connection with the development of Canadian trade and resources which the report brings specially to notice, as follows:—

The external trade of Canada has developed with astonishing rapidity in recent years. In the ten years between 1891 and 1900 it increased by 79 per cent.; in the thirteen years between 1900 and 1913 the increase was 190 per cent.

The trade with the United Kingdom has not, however, kept pace with this general development since the beginning of the century. The proportion both of imports from, and exports to, the United Kingdom has shown a tendency to decline.

In view of the large recent investments of capital from the United Kingdom in Canada, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that at least a part of this capital has reached the Dominion in the shape of foreign goods. We suggest that every effort should be made to alter this condition of affairs in the future.

Problems of Migration.

Public opinion in Canada is strongly in favor of greater control of the system of passage brokers and passage brokers' agents, etc., in the Mother Country.

The arrangements made for immigrants to Canada on the trans-Atlantic steamers appear to us to be satisfactory. As regards train journeys, we should welcome the appointment of matrons, wherever possible, to look after immigrant girls and women.

Some overlapping appears to exist between the activities of the Dominion and provincial governments in the matter of encouraging immigration which might well be discussed between the governments concerned with a view to better co-ordination.

The immigrants from the United Kingdom, whilst forming 37 per cent. of the number of arrivals during the last ten years, contributed only 27 per cent. of those who took up homesteads in the prairie provinces. This proportion contrasts unfavorably with that in the case of immigrants from the United States of America and other foreign countries.

In the prairie provinces there now remains south of Latitude 54 degrees only sufficient free unallotted land to make up 145,575 homesteads, and of this land the equivalent of 78,765 homesteads is more than 20 miles from a railway. North of Latitude 54 degrees, but south

of the northern limit of the wheat belt, whilst there is still practically unlimited land for homesteading, 90 per cent., at least, is 20 miles or more distant from railway facilities.

These facts point to the absolute necessity for giving further aid to settlers in future. In our opinion this assistance should be given by means of (a) the establishment of training farms for immigrants by the Dominion and provincial governments; (b) the supply of capital on easy terms on the security of improvements to be effected on the land.

In view of the shortage of domestic female labor in Canada, we advocate the starting of training establishments for immigrant girls and women.

We were impressed with the advantages of child immigration to Canada. We suggest, however, (a) that all societies should endeavor to secure the migration of children of both sexes in approximately equal numbers; (b) that societies concerned with the migration of girls as well as boys should see that their inspectorate includes women as well as men.

We are not in favor of government assistance in recovering advances made by charitable societies to emigrants.

Oversea Communications.

Attention is called to the facilities offered by the eastern ports of Canada for a fast trans-Atlantic service from the United Kingdom which will convey the mails, not only for the Canadian centres of population, but for Chicago and other parts of the middle west of the United States.

In the past too large a proportion of Canadian exports has passed through United States ports. This state of affairs is partially attributable to (a) the comparatively shallow depth of the St. Lawrence ship channel between Montreal and Quebec; (b) the high marine insurance rates on the cargoes carried to and from Canadian eastern ports and on the hulls of the vessels using these ports. Both these matters deserve the closest attention.

The possible advantages of alternative routes for the shipment of Canadian grain are dealt with. In particular, the question of the utilization of the Panama Canal is dealt with, and also the possible use of the Hudson Bay route.

The complaints made to us on the subject of freight rates between the United Kingdom and Canada are described and discussed, especially (a) the "arbitrary" or "spread" between the rates on grain and flour; (b) the