

CHAPTER VI.—IMMIGRATION.

While the great majority of French-Canadians can trace their genealogy back to ancestors who left the Old World 250 years ago or even longer, most English-speaking Canadians are comparative newcomers both to Canada and to this continent, though a considerable number of the United Empire Loyalist families had been resident in the old colonies for generations before they moved north to establish English-speaking settlements in what is now the Dominion of Canada. During the middle third of the nineteenth century a great English-speaking migration entered the province of Ontario and made it for the first time more populous than the sister province of Quebec, thus bringing about an agitation for representation by population. Thereafter immigration slackened until the dawn of the twentieth century brought another flood of settlers to the newly opened territories of the great Northwest, resulting in an increase of population between the censuses of 1901 and 1911 greater than the combined increase of the three decades from 1871 to 1901.

Section 1.—Statistics of Immigration.

Immigration during the second decade of the twentieth century promised at its commencement to be even greater than during the first. In its first three years no fewer than 1,141,547 persons entered Canada for purposes of settlement. If this rate had been maintained, the population of Canada in 1921 would have been in excess of ten millions instead of being less than nine millions. The Great War, which commenced for Canada on Aug. 4, 1914, dried up the sources of our immigration in Great Britain and Continental Europe, where every able-bodied man was needed for the defence of his country. Immigrant arrivals from the United Kingdom in 1918 numbered only some 3,000, as compared with 150,000 in 1913; from Continental Europe, immigrant arrivals numbered less than 3,000 in 1916, as compared with approximately 135,000 in 1914. Since the war, immigration to the Dominion has never approached that of the pre-war period.

Immigration to Canada, as to other new countries, is generally greatest in "boom" periods, when capital as well as labour is leaving the older countries for the newer in order to secure the more remunerative investments generally to be found in virgin territories where the natural resources are still unexploited. In periods of depression, however, the sending abroad of both capital and labour is diminished, both preferring at such times to endure the ills which they know at home rather than take the risks of a new adventure at a distance. This proposition is aptly illustrated by the statistics of Table 2, which show that during the past 34 years immigration was at its minimum in the year of deepest depression, 1897, that it steadily increased from that time until 1908, that a decline took place in the fiscal year ended Mar. 31, 1909, on account of the short depression of 1908, that thereafter immigration steadily increased till 1913, while the fiscal year ended Mar. 31, 1914, showed a decline due to the depression which occurred in the year preceding the war. In the fiscal years 1915 to 1919, political rather than economic conditions restricted immigration, but with the expansion of business at the end of the war our immigration was more than doubled, while the depression which characterized 1921 and 1922 is reflected in the declining immigration of the fiscal years ended Mar. 31, 1922 and 1923. The improvement in business conditions in 1923 was reflected in an increase of