

more than could be absorbed. This was a costly and confusing procedure but more serious maladjustments were prevented by the fact that there was an open door into the United States which acted as a safety valve to draw off the surplus."

In order to account for the emigration of Canadian-born a complementary logic has suggested that immigrants had displaced them,* although this theory shows little appreciation of at least the regional interrelationship of labour markets of the two countries. It has been suggested also that more consideration be given to the 'intention component' in migration. "One may wonder if suitable account has been taken of the destination of the immigrant; whether he will settle here or is *en route* to some other country after a longer or shorter period in Canada. This is an intrinsic difficulty arising out of the intention component of any definition of an immigrant that does not provide for a follow-up."†

This component in the main has been observable only in its results and its character is necessarily elusive if it is taken to involve more than what in retrospect appears to have been a misstatement of destination on the part of several million immigrants. It suggests, perhaps, that if in relation to immigration, consideration were given to the area of Canada alone, it would become as difficult to understand why millions should have moved into Canada as it is to understand emigration out of Canada by sole reference to conditions there, unless the target of the vast overseas migrations was in the first place "America", that is, the North American Continent.

It has been said respecting earlier migration that "it is the merest accident that millions of inhabitants of North America are living in their particular locality, for the considerations that led their ancestors to Virginia, Upper Canada, or the shores of the Missouri were frequently unbelievably trivial. A ship sailing on the day they reached the seaport, the destination of a chance acquaintance, or the suggestion of a propagandist led thousands to embark for New York, Quebec or New Orleans, while others *after their arrival* settled the matter whether they were to be Americans or Canadians, canal labourers, Kansas squatters, prairie farmers, or lumbermen in the wilds of New Brunswick or Minnesota."‡

It seems evident from the record that as immigrants developed a more marked sense of direction (after 1850 perhaps), British North America and Canada increasingly came to be seen in an ancillary or peripheral relation to the developing civilization of the United States. The concept 'Canada' has been of slow growth and this country's increasing emergence as an individualized and final destination began mainly at the turn of the century. However, immigration to America has had the force of a powerful myth which immigration to Canada, until very recently perhaps, has never had.

From this point of view the hundreds of thousands of immigrants who gave their destination as Canada were in effect giving Canada as their first destination in North America. This may seem a re-statement of the obvious. It seems to mean, however, that the number of immigrant entries and the number that left again do not necessarily constitute objective data for interpretations of absorptive capacity.

It may be noted finally that the intention component eventually must be explicable in terms of the individual immigrants. While the chance elements determining destination, referred to earlier, were evidently reduced as migration developed, mobility remains as a basic competitive asset of immigrants. The first aim of the immigrant always must be

* A. R. M. Lower, *From Colony to Nation* (Toronto, 1953), pp. 488-490.

† Nathan Keyfitz, *ibid.*, p. 47.

‡ Edwin C. Guillet, *The Great Migration* (New York, 1937), p. 204.