

During 1923, on account of the return of prosperity and the absorption of surplus labour, it became increasingly evident that popular opinion in Canada favoured a resumption of immigration activities on a considerable scale. The Government announced its intention of encouraging the migration of the largest possible number of those classes of settlers which Canada can absorb. This policy was embodied in a statement made by the Hon. J. A. Robb shortly after his appointment as Minister of Immigration and Colonization, and elicited favourable comment in the British press, which welcomed a resumption of Canadian immigration activities. While, as the Minister pointed out, there are would-be immigrants into Canada who are not suited for the Dominion owing to physical, moral or industrial unfitness or because they belong to races that cannot be assimilated without social or economic loss to Canada, there are in Great Britain and Continental Europe tens of thousands of skilled workers and unskilled workers (not agriculturists) who would be an asset to Canada if steady employment could be found for them.

The present immigration policy of the Canadian Government recognizes that while Canada requires increased population, quality rather than quantity must count; that British immigration must hold first place in the programme, and that the selection of Canada's new settlers must have due regard to their physical, industrial, and financial fitness, and the Dominion's power of absorption.

The greatest need is for those able and willing to settle on the land and assist in agricultural development. While capital is essential to immediate land settlement, its absence will not close the road to prosperity to those strong of hand and stout of heart, determined to succeed. The open door policy prevails for those classes likely to succeed and for whom there is a demand. In the interests of the immigrant and of Canada, determination of fitness, as far as possible, takes place before the immigrant leaves his own country. Final approval is not given until the immigrant arrives in Canada, but those who consult the Canadian Government agents overseas are able to learn the conditions of admission, and many journeys which would have ended in rejection are thus prevented. As the British Isles alone cannot furnish a sufficient quota of the agricultural classes, efforts are being made to encourage immigration from certain areas of the continent of Europe and from the United States.

Steps have been taken to ensure efficient co-operation with the British Government under the terms of the Empire Settlement Act as they apply to affording assistance to those of the agricultural and house-worker classes from the Mother country. To promote the better functioning of colonization activities in Canada, the machinery of the Soldier Settlement Board has been co-ordinated with that of the Department of Immigration and Colonization. This action has placed at the command of the Department a large and well organized staff, with representatives throughout the Dominion thoroughly conversant with local conditions and able to advise and direct the newcomer to his best advantage.