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# BUREAU OF PROVINCIAL INFORMATION AND IMMIGRATION.

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## FIRST ANNUAL REPORT.

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*To the Hon. J. D. Prentice,  
Acting Provincial Secretary.*

SIR,—I have the honour to submit my First Annual Report as Secretary of the Bureau of Provincial Information and Immigration. Upon the death of the late John Jessop, upon your recommendation, the offices of Information, or Statistics, and Immigration, as being closely allied, were merged, and the work has been carried on ever since in the rooms occupied by the late Immigration Agent. In this connection, as a tribute to the memory of a respected pioneer and an efficient public servant, I wish to say that an examination of his correspondence, and from a personal knowledge of his work, he rendered valuable service to the public. He was painstaking, obliging, and very careful and methodical in the information afforded to inquirers, and ever industrious.

In the organisation of an office dealing with such a variety of subjects, there is of necessity a large amount of fundamental work to be done, the result of which is not at first seen; in other words, in acquiring back data and rendering information available with which to form a basis of reference and comparison hereafter. In addition to that, there is the regular correspondence, which is considerable, not only in the way of answers to direct inquiries, but in respect to inquiries to other Departments, to the Board of Trade and other bodies, which are largely referred to this office to be dealt with.

During the year 1901 the number of inquiries received was 1,408, mainly from prospective settlers or those desiring information concerning the Province. Of these, 362 were received by the late Mr. Jessop. The number of letters outward was 1,389.

I may say that the inquiries during the present year have been largely on the increase there being a constantly-growing interest in British Columbia. The inquiries are mainly for land, a large percentage of those seeking information being actual farmers. There is, however, considerable inquiry regarding mining and other industries. All inquiries are answered in detail as far as possible, and by forwarding reports and publications dealing more or less specifically with the subjects inquired about.

It is interesting to note the localities from which the inquiries proceed. By far the greater number come from the Middle and North-western States of America and the Canadian North-West. A fair sprinkling comes from California, Oregon, Washington and Eastern Canada. In nearly every instance the inquiry is for land and for information respecting Government land. These originate on account of the favourable reports about our climate, markets and general good prospects. Those from the North-West and North-western States frequently express a desire to go where it is not so cold in winter. Many in the United States are Canadians naturalized, and long to return to Canada and Canadian institutions. The inquiries from Great Britain are largely from those seeking employment.

The publications which have been distributed from the office are the following :—

Revised Compendiums of the Year Book .....	2,500
" Edition " " .....	1,000
Minister of Mines Report, 1900 .....	1,500
Report of Department of Agriculture, 1900 .....	1,000
Vancouver Board of Trade Report .....	2,000
Victoria " .....	2,000
Digest of Crown Lands Surveys (1901) .....	1,200
C. P. R. British Columbia pamphlet .....	1,500
Pamphlet, Minister of Mines .....	2,000
Mining and Land Acts and other publications .....	as asked for.

These publications have not been sent out indiscriminately, but as the result of direct inquiry. A number of each were sent to the Agent-General's office in London, and to the Glasgow and Buffalo Expositions, and a limited number to each of the Dominion Government agencies in the United States and on the Continent.

From the number and character of inquiries received, two things impress me as to requirements at the present time and hereafter: publications dealing specifically, accurately and in detail with the subjects about which information is required; definite locations upon which to place those who desire to settle, and definite conditions of settlement and tenure.

Regarding the former, as you are aware, efforts are being directed as desired, and regarding the latter it is difficult, if not impossible, to proceed until some measure is passed under which authority may be taken for providing the same. The question of obtaining settlers does not enter into consideration at all. What the peculiar conditions of this Province suggest as the proper and effective method of settlement is the setting apart of tracts of land, where available, in small holdings for the purposes of fruit, poultry, vegetables, dairying in a small way, and other products of small mixed farming, to which those settlers so inclined could be invited. The success of such settlements, however, depends so much on improved methods and intelligent industry that expert instructors are necessary to place them in the right way and avoid the mistakes which have led to so many failures in this Province in farming in the way proposed. There is only limited opportunity for grain-growing, as carried on in the broader areas of the East, and no matter how successful farmers may have been elsewhere, they are just as apt to fail as others when coming in contact with conditions such as obtain here. There is room for a large number of small farmers in the Westminster District, in the Okanagan Valleys, along the line of the C. P. R. in the Dominion railway belt, on Vancouver Island, and in frequent small valleys at the heads of inlets along the coast of the Mainland. The gain in concentrating settlements is threefold: (1) in the increased number of settlers possible; (2) in the lessening of the general cost of administration; (3) in the social intercourse it creates.

During the year, negotiations have been carried on in respect to four proposed colonies, and definite proposals have been submitted, on lines suggested by the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, through this office. They were:—

For Malcolm Island, for a colony of Finns, a grant of 80 acres to each colonist on terms of seven years' occupation and improvement.

For San Josef Valley, north end of Vancouver Island, 80 acres to each of 100 settlers on terms of five years' occupation and improvement.

For 3,200 acres on Queen Charlotte Islands for dairying purposes, 20 settlers, 160 acres each, on conditions of improvement and erection of creamery.

For one township in Bulkley Valley, 100 settlers at 160 acres each, five years' occupation and improvements equal to value of land.

The beginnings in each case will be made this spring, and one year is allowed to complete arrangements.

Special investigation has been entered into in regard to the markets on the Pacific open to British Columbia with reference to iron and steel, pulp and paper, copper, lead, fish and timber, and products thereof. In regard to iron and steel and pulp and paper, the results were published in the Compendium of the Year Book, 1901, page 207, which gives all the information available. There are, however, special difficulties in obtaining full returns or information in detail in regard to some of the countries on the Pacific under the flags of various foreign powers. They are not contained in any publication, official or otherwise, so far as can be ascertained—and inquiry has been made in every direction—not even in the reports of the British Consular Office, which, though including all the countries in question, do not deal in sufficient detail with the particular products under consideration to be of value.

However, the matter was taken up through the Agent-General, London, circular letters being addressed to all the British Consular Agents on the Pacific, requesting the fullest information on each subject, and letters were also addressed to each of the Governments in question. The subject was also brought to the attention of the Department of Trade and Commerce, Ottawa, with a request for co-operation. Replies are now being received, and as soon as all of these are in hand a bulletin will be issued containing the fullest and latest information.

Another interesting feature in connection with the work is the number of letters from financial agents and representatives of capital in the United States cities, seeking specific information, statutes, and official reports respecting special matters, indicating the general attention which is being directed towards this country on the other side, to which, for some time at least, we shall look for capital, rather than to Great Britain.

For some time prior to the departure of Hon. J. H. Turner, the Department was engaged in preparing material and supplies for the office of the Agent-General, which has been pretty thoroughly equipped. Among other things, a very large and representative collection of photographs, numbering about 800, besides several hundred lantern slides for lectures, were forwarded.

An effort is being made through the Agent-General to obtain domestic servants in Great Britain, and a number of applications have already been received from those desirous of making contracts of employment with girls or women who are reputably endorsed. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company have expressed themselves agreeable, in the matter of transportation, to meet the Government on advantageous terms, provided a sufficient number of fares is guaranteed.

As the appointment of the Secretary of this Department is made under the authority of the "Library and Bureau of Statistics Act, 1894," historical research is also included among the duties of the office. In 1901, a number of Hudson's Bay Company documents referring to the Oregon Territory, from the date of the founding of Fort Vancouver onward, including letters and journals, have been secured, and will be placed in the archives of the Province.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

R. E. GOSNELL,

*Secretary, Bureau of Information and Immigration.*

